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Contents

The Week 317

Editorials

The Rift in the Clouds 320
Penny Wise and Election Foolish 321
Terrorism for the Unemployed 323

General Articles

The League in Action ..... H. N. Brailsford 324
Civil War in the A.F. of L. .... William P. Mangold 326
Spying on the Jobless ..... Isidor Feinstein 328
Off to Ethiopia ..... Jack Harris 331
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 332
Other People's Money ..... John T. Flynn 333
Sad But (Otherwise) True ..... Otis Ferguson 335

Correspondence 338

Opera Blues ..... Stark Young 338

Books in Review

Communism Faces the Wrath to Come ..... Harold J. Laski 339
Agrophantics ..... Henry A. Wallace 340
Poker Face ..... Peter Olden 340
Educating Free Men ..... Evelyn Dewey 341
The Critic's Refuge ..... Isabel Lewis 341
The Arabs at Home ..... Isidor Schneider 342
Beyond Physics ..... Benjamin Ginzburg 342
Books in Brief 343

The Week

ON FRIDAY, October 18, at 5 P.M. New York time, the international skies were almost completely black. Italy and Great Britain had arrived at an impasse which had pushed the Ethiopian affair into the background. From half a dozen European capitals had come dispatches within the previous few hours warning of the grave danger of war. One hour later, this whole picture had changed. It was announced that Great Britain had agreed to withdraw from the Mediterranean some of her largest ships. Mussolini in turn had promised to end the concentration of 50,000 crack troops in Libya near the Egyptian frontier. France had at last given a "firm offer" of naval aid to Great Britain in case of an unprovoked Italian attack. Already rumors were in circulation, which were to become more definite within the next day or two, that Italy would soon announce the terms on which she would make peace with—or rather, in—Ethiopia. Rarely in recent history has such a sharp change in the international temperature taken place in so short a time. For this, credit is given to M. Laval, who, in view of his very difficult position at home, badly needs all the international prestige he can accumulate.

JUST what happened on that fateful Friday, we can only surmise. The League had been steadily marching forward toward the application of at least some sanctions to Italy, by at least part of its members, at some time or other in the visible future. No doubt Mussolini was warned that his truculent policy enhanced the danger of an incident somewhere in the Mediterranean. Possibly he had been told the British naval experts' guess that by sacrificing a quarter of her fleet Britain could win a war with Il Duce in about eight or ten weeks' time. With or without such a war, he was alarmed at the prospect of a British blockade closing the Suez Canal and cutting the umbilical cord to his East African armies. As for the Ethiopian war, it is pretty clear that he planned from the beginning for a conflict of brief duration, say, sixty or ninety days, at the end of which time he would announce a magnificent victory, and accept peace terms not unlike those he was offered before the fighting began. (At present, he is said to want three Ethiopian provinces, confirmation of his right to build a railway between Eritrea and Italian Somaliland and whatever else he can get.) As the Ethiopian adventure runs its allotted course, it becomes more and more foolhardy for him to risk the disaster of war with Great Britain, especially in view of the fact that he will be far better equipped for such a war, if he survives that long, three or five years hence.

IT WOULD be a calamitous mistake to assume too lightly that all danger is past in the Mediterranean, as it would be to forget the threat of new hostilities in the Far East. Even without the warships which the British, as a political gesture, are sending home, they still have a powerful fleet assembled at the danger spot. Even without the Italian troops in Libya, there is plenty of danger of an uprising in Egypt, in the presence or absence of covert Italian assistance. Hitler remains the Question Mark of Europe and while last week's coup in Austria seemed to strengthen that country's bonds with Italy, there is reason to believe that in fact it brought a coalition with Germany perceptibly nearer. Laval's position on the fence is a precarious one;

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if he were succeeded by a Right government, this would mean strengthening the ties with Mussolini to an extent which might cause that excitable gentleman to snap his fingers before the British lion's jaws, while a Left government would go much farther than Laval has done in supporting League sanctions against Italy of a more drastic nature than have yet received serious consideration. Europe's high fever, which threatened immediate dissolution, has subsided for the moment; but the crisis of the disease has not yet been passed.

WHILE the news from the Far East has been somewhat better during the last few days, the situation there remains critical in the extreme. Japanese warships were sent to Swatow, near Canton, after the Cantonese government had seized Japanese-owned cargoes of rice on which it said local taxes had not been paid. Relations between Japan and Russia continue tense, and there is every reason to believe that the Japanese are going ahead with their plan to assume suzerainty over all of North China. How soon and how rapidly this will be done depends primarily upon the degree to which Great Britain is embroiled in the Mediterranean. From Germany comes the news that her General Staff was long ago reconstituted, in further violation of the Versailles Treaty. There is trouble in Spain again, the immediate cause for which is the charge that members of the government accepted large-scale bribes from the owner of a gambling house at San Sebastian. It is now generally understood that an election will be held in Great Britain, probably late in November, with an equally general understanding that it will result in a sweeping Tory victory. In the French senatorial elections the left-wing People's Front made remarkable gains, a fact that may ultimately have more significance than all the rest of the week's news put together.

REPORTS from London indicate that a five-power naval conference may be held before the end of November. It is generally conceded that there is no possibility of renewing the Washington and London treaties. Instead, it is proposed that each nation declare its building program for the next five or ten years. Since no formal treaties will need ratification, Japanese prestige will not be involved, and it is predicted, perhaps over-optimistically, that Japan's delegates, while demanding theoretical equality with the United States, will in practice be content with less. In a note to the British government last week, Japan proposed the abolition of capital ships, heavy cruisers and aircraft carriers—the three classes of ships, the Japanese point out, that would be most useful to an aggressor nation. These are also the three classes of ships in which this country is greatly superior to Japan, and it is quite possible that the Japanese offer was made chiefly to embarrass the United States. Nevertheless, it is hard to find any good reason why this country should not accept with thankfulness. The ostensible purpose of our navy is to protect Hawaii and continental America, and if Japan agrees to sink its most formidable warships, the task of our navy will be that much easier, and we shall be correspondingly more secure.

IN THE United States, the meeting of the American Federation of Labor, reported elsewhere in this issue, was the most important event of the past week. Father Coughlin let it be known that he intends to continue his National Union for Social Justice and that rumors he intends to support Mr. Roosevelt uncritically are without foundation. Senator George Norris of Nebraska, on the other hand, announced his provisional support for Mr. Roosevelt in 1936, on the assumption that the Republicans, of whose party he is nominally a member, would choose a reactionary candidate and would base their campaign on blind opposition to the New Deal. Both the National Council for Prevention of War and the Conference on the Cause and Cure of War, two of the country's leading pacifist organizations, gave their general support to the neutrality policy of the government. The N.C.P.W. recommended that the present embargo on arms and ammunitions be extended to cover loans, credits and raw materials useful for war purposes. It urged entrance into the League of Nations, with a reservation as to the use of American armed force in carrying out League sanctions. The C.C.C.W. commended the President for his "prompt action in proclaiming the application of the neutrality law."

REPRESENTATIVES of thirteen states, meeting at Albany, New York, worked on proposals to protect labor through interstate compacts, a plan that seems open to nearly all the objections that arise when such efforts are undertaken by the commonwealths individually. The National Resources Board, which is our nearest present approach to a national planning body, issued a report on the future of our population, with some specific recommendations from subsidiary bodies in individual states. It repeated the well known fact that our population will be stabilized by 1960, at which time there will be twice as many persons over sixty as there are at present, and one-half as many under twenty. The American Legion is excited over the charge by Representative Wright Patman that $74,000 was taken to the Chicago Convention of the veterans for the purpose of fighting a resolution that would have recommended payment of the bonus through inflation.

A COMMITTEE of 339 psychiatrists of 30 nationalities, sponsored by the Medical Association of the Netherlands, has addressed a manifesto to the world declaring that war is insane, in the strict medical sense of the word. Unmistakably referring to Mussolini and Hitler, they assert that statesmen who glorify war are carried away by "hallucinations and delusions." They point out that mod-

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ern warfare is obviously a horrible and devastating business, and that anyone believing that it is profitable or glorious must necessarily be a neurotic who has failed to adjust to reality. It is a solemn thought to realize that, by this definition, the greater part of mankind at present is ruled by crazy people.

TWO interesting incidents have recently taken place on the West Coast. A ship carrying lumber, scheduled to dock at Seattle, Washington, was suddenly rerouted, stopping at another and more obscure port because of a "fear of labor trouble." The significance of this phrase lay in the fact that the Seattle Central Labor Council had passed a resolution boycotting ships carrying cargo for Italy. San Francisco and Portland labor are taking similar steps. At San Pedro, California, sailors on the Norweigan tanker "Britta" refused to sail with a cargo of gasoline for the Italian war area in East Africa, and the ship's destination was therefore changed to the Azores. Here is direct action by labor in opposition to war, of a sort that has some extremely interesting potentialities.

NEW YORK CITY'S proposed amendment to the municipal sanitary code covering drugs and cosmetics is an interesting attempt by a municipality to obtain for itself the benefits of the original Tugwell bill that was so thoroughly scuttled by the food and drug interests in the national Congress. The New York measure prohibits the sale of harmful drugs and the use of fraudulent or misleading advertising and provides for the registration of formulas and labels and the rigid exclusion of products containing injurious ingredients. Every drug or cosmetic sold in the city must have a license from the Board of Health. The license fee is $25 per product for the first year, and $10 annually for renewals. The amendment is thus geared to produce a considerable revenue, and its proponents regard this as a laudable and relatively painless method of taxation, although the revenue-producing features of the amendment are a distinctly secondary consideration. The organized proprietary-medicine and cosmetics interests, who battered the original Tugwell proposals into the feeble, amorphous Copeland bill that finally passed the Senate in such form that even the interests favored it, are thoroughly aroused over the "little Tugwell" bill in New York. Already the public hearings on the measure, originally scheduled for October 14, have been postponed to December 2. The drug trades fear—probably with some reason—that the idea may spread to other states.

THE very essence of war's tragedy is expressed in the words used by a committee of students' organizations in calling for a nationwide demonstration against war to be held on the morning of Armistice Day. "It is our generation which will be sacrificed, our minds, our bodies which will be perverted and blasted for wholly destructive ends," say these young people, standing in the shadow of the present international crisis. They urge a four-point program: genuine neutrality legislation in the United States, with no loans, credits, munitions or secondary war materials going to belligerents; the demilitarization of schools and colleges; the relating of college curricula to the realities of the international situation and a direct refusal to support the government of the United States in any war it may undertake. Organizations coöperating in this Armistice Day Mobilization for Peace include the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., the National Student Federation, the Student League for Industrial Democracy, the American Youth Congress, the National Student League, the Committee on Militarism in Education and the student division of the American League Against War and Fascism.

EFFORTS to break through the unofficial but very real censorship imposed upon American radio broadcasting are embodied in three bills, known as the Scott Radio bills, introduced in the last Congress and now being prepared for reintroduction in the next Congress under the sponsorship of the American Civil Liberties Union. American broadcasting stations are privately owned, representing an enormous and very lucrative vested interest, and most of the important programs are broadcast on behalf of commercial advertisers. This condition results in a multiplicity of powerful taboos, and the attuning of virtually the whole of American broadcasting to the ideology of the country's dominant commercial class. The first of the Scott bills would require that each broadcasting station, as a condition for obtaining its license, should set aside—free—regular periods at desirable times of the day and evening "for uncensored discussion on a non-profit basis of public, social, political and economic problems, and for educational purposes." The station would be required to give a hearing to at least two sides of every controversial issue presented. A second bill would clear stations—but not speakers—of responsibility for remarks made on such programs, and a third bill would require stations to keep accurate and open-to-the-public records of applications for broadcasting time, and reasons for rejection of applications or interference with program content.

A PERFECT pattern for a fascist university is outlined in the report issued by the committee of the Wisconsin Senate appointed last spring to investigate alleged radicalism at the University of Wisconsin. Thus the committee, after saying it found abundant "proof" of all possible charges of radicalism, including the labeling of President Glenn Frank as a "communist," embodies in the first of its four major recommendations the thesis that "individuals or societies offering or expounding un-American doctrines [should] be expelled." The sweeping vagueness of the term "un-American doctrines" would delight the connoisseur's eye of a Mussolini or a Hitler; and the second major recommendation, "that the University coöperate with

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any organization whose purpose is the furtherance of Americanism," is a virtual muster call for the chromatic-shirted legions. The third recommendation for "constant vigilance . . . to secure full and complete information as to anti-American activities" certainly would be understood by Nazi and Fascist secret police, who would also gloat over the fourth recommendation, to "prevent with strict disciplinary action the efforts of any member or group . . . to undermine the position or character of any individual." As it stands, the committee's report is a mere finding of "fact" and has no direct authority behind it. It is to be hoped that students, faculty and administrative officers of the University of Wisconsin will unite in disregarding a report at once so dangerous and so puerile.

THE sharecroppers' strike in Alabama has developed into an ugly situation. Plantation owners, in coöperation with deputy sheriffs and the press, have in recent months added several gaudy chapters to the story of murder and terrorism in the South. The strike, led by the Sharecroppers' Union, started August 19, the union demanding one dollar per hundred pounds for the picking of cotton. The average worker can pick a hundred pounds a day and was receiving as low as thirty-four cents per hundred. The reaction to the strike was immediate and forceful. A Negro strike leader was murdered in Lowndes County by a gang of vigilantes. A worker was sentenced to ten months on the road gang for violation of a local "literature ordinance." A group of Alabama cotton pickers, recently arrived in New York, reports that eight of their number have been killed since the beginning of the strike, but the total record of deaths cannot be checked as many workers have fled to the woods and swamps for safety. During the first month of the strike three unidentified Negro bodies were found in the heart of the cotton pickers' strike country.

IT IS perhaps to be expected that violence should increase with the workers' efforts to better their conditions, but even in the months preceding the strike the owners' tactics were brutal enough to cause a a shame-faced comment in The Birmingham Age-Herald to the effect that the beating of workers should not be allowed as it was "giving the state a bad name." Against such systematic oppression the partial success of the strike is at least hopeful. In parts of Tallapoosa County owners are paying seventy-five cents per hundred pounds and furnishing two meals a day, and elsewhere there has been a slight increase in wages. Even more encouraging is the spread of the strike to Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma, where several thousand cotton pickers in the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union voted for a general strike. A merger of this union and the Sharecroppers' Union is now being considered by a joint committee, a move that may lead to the building up of an organization strong enough to cope with the plantation owners on even terms.

The Rift in the Clouds

IN THE European struggle for power, the winner last week was England. Authentic information about the talks that took place among London, Paris and Rome is lacking, and the truth may never be known. However, the generally accepted belief is that Laval gave notice to Mussolini that his government would no longer oppose England either at Geneva or in the Mediterranean. This news seems to have had a sobering effect on Mussolini, and impelled him to make fresh overtures to England.

The extent to which imperialism abroad and class conflict at home are interconnected was illustrated once again by last week's events. Laval hopes to use the present crisis to defeat the French People's Front, and the Tory Cabinet in England hopes to use it to win the impending elections. In Italy, the entire Fascist regime is at stake. All three governments are serving class, rather than national, interests, and none shows any serious concern for the interests of Europe as a whole.

Two months ago, Laval's government seemed doomed. The deflationary decrees that it enacted last spring had brought determined protests from workers, government employees and farmers, without arousing any compensating enthusiasm among the small bourgeoisie. Upon the reconvening of the Chamber, it seemed likely that Laval would be succeeded by a Left government. In this predicament, he tried to save himself by exploiting the Ethiopian crisis. The French peasants were told that Italy was the best ally of France against Hitler, and that the People's Front wished to destroy Mussolini through the imposition of League sanctions. This, the peasants were informed, would expose France to the imminent danger of German conquest. It has been reported that this propaganda has been partially successful, and brought many recruits to the French fascist organization, the Croix de Feu.

During the last few weeks, France has seemed to pursue two contradictory foreign policies. One of these policies has been quite evidently that of the Quai d'Orsay and the French General Staff, neither of which is greatly impressed by Mussolini's value as an ally. Its objective has been to seize the present opportunity to form a solid front with England against Hitler. The other policy has been that of the Croix de Feu and other extreme Right groups, which Laval himself has apparently felt compelled to follow. The aim of this second policy has been to prevent an agreement with England until Mussolini had had time to make big gains in Africa.

Apparently the British for a while were fooled by the dual character of French policy, and did not suspect that Laval was secretly supporting Mussolini. Last week, however, they presented him with a virtual ultimatum. Laval was born in Auvergne, a region that is reputed to produce the shrewdest traders of France. The British demanded a yes-or-no answer, and Laval took more than eight

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thousand words in which to frame his reply. But from the evident satisfaction in London, and the nervousness in Rome, it seems reasonable to assume that he promised to discontinue his aid to Mussolini.

If it were not for the domestic situation in England, the way would probably be clear for an imperialist partition of Ethiopia. The Tory government in England has now successfully stolen the peace issue from the Labor Party, and expects to win the next election by capturing the eleven million voters who signed Lord Cecil's pro-League petition. It cannot, consequently, enter into a thieves' bargain with Mussolini until the election has taken place. It is expected that an election date will soon be fixed.

Because of the lack of trustworthy news from Italy, the internal situation there is difficult to appraise. But there are signs that Mussolini is more worried by the growing restlessness among Italian business men than he is by the concentration of the British fleet before the Suez Canal. For many years, Italian trade has been peculiarly dependent upon England. Italian insurance companies, for example, regularly reinsure their risks in London. This reinsurance has now been abruptly cut off at the behest of the English government, causing apprehension among Italian shipowners and exporters. Apparently Italian business men, as a group, are also beginning to fear for the lira. However the Ethiopian war turns out, they realize that Mussolini must apply to London or Paris for a loan if uncontrollable inflation is to be avoided. Since they fear that a loan from Paris would be accompanied by French financial penetration, they would prefer that it be obtained in London, where they are accustomed to doing business. However, they see that Mussolini is rapidly making this impossible.

Fragmentary reports indicate unrest among the workers of the northern industrial cities of Italy. While prices have been kept from rising by the authorities, shortages of various commodities are rumored to be developing. It is reported that workers' shop committees have sharply demanded improved conditions, and that, in a few instances, the local Fascist leaders have had to intervene to prevent disturbances.

A final factor causing Mussolini's present conciliatory attitude is the failure of his armies to advance more rapidly in Ethiopia. Inspired stories from Rome have hinted that Italian forces were being deliberately held back, in order to give Mussolini opportunity for diplomatic maneuvering in London and Geneva. This seems incredible. Mussolini has received the formal condemnation of the League, and is being openly opposed by England. He has nothing to gain by delaying action in Ethiopia, and a decisive victory over Haile Selassie's troops would put him in a distinctly better bargaining position. An indication that the campaign in Ethiopia is not progressing according to schedule is given by the appearance of Marshal Badoglio at the front. According to report, Mussolini is jealous of Badoglio, and would not have permitted him to share the African limelight if the elderly General de Bono had shown himself adequate to his task.

In his rumored understanding with England last week, Mussolini clearly received the worst of the bargain. By consenting to remove the battle cruisers "Hood" and "Renown" from Mediterranean waters, the British made no real concession whatever. These two great ships, which would take two years or more to replace, were far too valuable, in the British Admiralty's judgment, to be risked in a second-rate war with Italy. If war had come, it is reliably reported that the "Hood" and the "Renown" would not have been permitted to lift anchor. On his side, by agreeing to withdraw his troops and airplanes from the Egyptian border, Mussolini accepted a definite military handicap. As a result of the understanding, the main British fleet is still before the entrance of the Suez Canal, capable at any moment of cutting off the Italian armies in Africa from their homeland. Mussolini, however, is no longer able to order an instantaneous raid on the British fleet base at Alexandria, nor on the newly enlarged British air base at Aboukir.

It is obvious that last week's negotiations among England, France and Italy constitute no more than a first small step toward the complete liquidation of the Ethiopian crisis. Many observers believe that little more can be accomplished until Laval has faced the French Chamber, the English have held their general election and the Italian armies in Ethiopia have made further gains. If this is true, Europe will remain in a highly dangerous state for another two or three months, during which it can be predicted that sudden flare-ups, like that of last week, will occur with wavelike regularity. Meantime the League committee on sanctions will continue to meet at Geneva, knowing that because of the determination of the Great Powers to settle the Ethiopian controversy to their own advantage, its labors are largely in vain.

Penny Wise and Election Foolish

A STRIKING development of the past few years in American public life is the use of large-scale referenda to determine the attitude of the voters on leading national questions. Probably the best known of these are the Literary Digest polls and especially those taken during presidential campaigns, which have proved astonishingly accurate in predicting the final vote. No such poll, of course, has ever recorded the views of more than a small minority of the citizenry; but it is now demonstrated beyond doubt that the sampling method, when it is honestly and skillfully pursued, is entirely reliable in recording public sentiment. Indeed, a bill was actually introduced into Congress to make such polls illegal, on the ground that since Americans love to back a winner, whoever was shown by

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the polls to be ahead would infallibly be elected, thus invalidating the democratic process.

A national organization now exists for the sole purpose of taking such polls and publicizing their results. Every week, the American Institute of Public Opinion releases to a large number of newspapers the facts gathered by its investigators throughout the country as to what the public thinks about some important national question. So far as we know, this institute operates with competence and impartiality and its results may be taken as accurate. This week's question is whether government expenditures for relief and recovery are too large, too small or about right. The institute has sampled public opinion on this subject on several previous occasions, running back eighteen months, and a comparison of the successive polls gives some striking data. As was to be expected, the Republicans have believed expenditures are too large; the percentage was 90 a year and a half ago, and is about the same today. Among the Democrats, however, the number who believe that spending is excessive has increased about fourfold during the past eighteen months. The result is therefore that whereas in February, 1934, only 37 percent of the total number in both parties felt that too much is being spent, the proportion has now risen to 60 percent. Those who think the amount is about right have dwindled from 46 percent to 31, and those who believe the expenditure should be increased have shrunk from 17 to 9 percent. The swing away from government expenditures is heaviest in New England, and the adverse vote is nowhere less than one-half of the total except in the Mountain states.

All this, to be sure, does not necessarily point to a defeat for Mr. Roosevelt in 1936. In part, at least, it probably reflects skillful propaganda by the American Liberty League and its allies. The administration is also adept at propaganda, and it has a year in which to work. The great unsolved problem is what line it ought to pursue. Several recent statements by Mr. Roosevelt have said that public expenditures will be sharply reduced, and this process has in fact already begun. In our judgment, however, this policy has a fatal weakness, even considered on the lowest possible ground of political expediency. It amounts to saying that the Liberty League is right; that the government *has* spent too much money, but has seen the error of its ways and now proposes to reform. Elections are not won by repentant sinners.

We can only guess at the causes for the startling upset among the Democrats, and in public opinion in general, on the question of government expenditure; but in our judgment it is based, not on the size of the spending but its form. The American people want to feel that Uncle Sam is getting value received for the billions he is pouring out, and they do not believe this today. The criticism of "boondoggling," while largely unfair, has left its mark on the country. Even more important has been the policy in regard to public works, particularly in its later stages. The poll quoted above shows a sharp rise in anti-administration sentiment coinciding with President Roosevelt's policy of providing "made work" for 3,500,000 unemployed heads of families, out of funds so small that less than $1,200 is available per worker per year. Since wages will take $600 of this, on the average, the remainder is so inadequate that necessarily the greater part of the permanent, valuable public-works program has been scrapped.

One of the best of these projects, from the beginning, has been housing; but after two and one-half years, hardly any housing has been done and present plans are negligible. A good deal of money has been spent on roads, but far less than the country's needs would justify, and it has been frittered away in small allotments so that the average citizen gets no feeling of substantial accomplishment. Money has also been spent on the army and navy, but since many people regard such expenditures as wasteful at best, they do not offset the impression that Uncle Sam's cash is being squandered. The fact that the work-relief program is lagging catastrophically, that ten days before the deadline only about a million and a quarter persons had been put to work instead of three and a half millions, has certainly not served to counteract the public impression.

It is now clear that the President's policy, undertaken with such haste and airiness, was a bad blunder. Relief and public works should never have been treated as one problem. Relief should have been adequate to maintain a decent standard of life for every one of the twenty million victims of the economic storm. Public works should have been planned far in advance, should have embraced only projects of solid usefulness and should have employed only competent labor at standard wages regardless of whether the individuals involved had been previously unemployed. Above all, these public works should have been on a bold, heroic scale to capture the national imagination. A huge nationwide housing project would have fulfilled the terms; so would a trans-continental six-lane motor highway, without grade crossings, with branches to the Canadian and Mexican borders. So would a program to eliminate all dangerous railroad crossings in, say, five or ten years. So would a nation-wide plan for wild-life sanctuaries.

We believe that the American people, confronted by great proposals of this character, and reminded that they were in the tradition of our forefathers who conquered a continent, would accept the cost without grumbling, particularly when they knew that these projects would also create vast employment and would further the process of recovery from the depression, a process which so far as anyone knows has up to now depended entirely upon such spending as the government has done. But when the President virtually admits that he has been forced to return to raking the leaves, and tacitly conceals the truth of the Liberty League's charges

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by promising to spend less and less, he makes himself vulnerable on two counts. It is not yet too late to stem the tide that is today setting so heavily against him. Six months from now, his opportunity will have gone.

Terrorism for the Unemployed

THE ARTICLE by Isidor Feinstein, which begins on page 328 of this issue, reveals a situation that every American would do well to ponder. Mr. Feinstein offers documentary evidence that persons on relief in New York City have been subjected to widespread and systematic espionage. Those regarded as "trouble makers" have in some cases had their relief suspended for this reason alone. A "trouble maker" is one who is active in the affairs of organizations of the unemployed, demanding more adequate relief, better working conditions under the W. P. A. and its predecessors, etc.

It is easy to understand the irritation of the social workers who, in the main, are in charge of relief in Washington and in the various states and cities. Few of these men and women have ever had any experience in labor relations; most of them, before the depression, had worked all their lives on salaries for private or public welfare groups, caring for individual "clients," who were pathetically grateful for anything done for them. But today, the twenty million persons on relief include many of a different caliber—people who were successful in their own fields a few years ago, people who are conscious of no personal failure but quite correctly attribute their plight to the iniquities of a wretched, makeshift social system. Some of these individuals held radical views before 1929 and others have acquired them in the hard school of recent experience. Particularly in a large city like New York, they present a real problem in human relations. They protest actively and vigorously against what they consider unfair treatment. Some of them have no work of any kind, and the tasks invented for others are totally inadequate to absorb their whole energies. To the officials in charge of relief, many of whom work eighteen hours a day, the unemployed seem to talk too much, to form too many committees, to write too many long letters, to demand an excessive number of excessively long and stormy public hearings. For psychological reasons that are all too easy to understand, spokesmen for the unemployed are anything but conciliatory in their tactics. They see no reason to apologize for their existence, and they don't.

So far as we know, not one city in the United States has done a really first-class job in handling this problem. The social workers, in their great test, have on the whole proved bad executives, unimaginative, unsympathetic, too quick to fall back upon the easy solution of charging that the unemployed are seeking to overturn the government, too hasty in threatening a recalcitrant with the danger of starvation for himself and his family. It would have been easy, in such a city as New York, for example, to set up a complaint bureau wholly divorced from the administration of relief, perhaps with a panel of distinguished citizens whose members would take turns in sitting as a small group to hear grievances, no matter how long winded, and to receive delegations, no matter how large. Instead of this, we have had recourse to the methods Mr. Feinstein describes.

The tragic part of all this is that the leaders of the unemployed have in fact been fighting the battle of the social workers far more effectively than they themselves have done. By their agitation, the spokesmen for the jobless have brought about many badly needed reforms. They have created public opinion in favor of larger relief. They have helped to stop the infamous food baskets and grocery orders of an earlier day. They have been largely responsible for the development of work-relief projects, which have put an end to the dry rot of the unemployed sitting idle at home all day.

And their task is not finished. In spite of all the government's efforts there are still at least 11,000,000 unemployed of whom only a small portion will be reabsorbed by private industry under any restoration of prosperity in the visible future. Leading dietitians, after a careful study of the situation, maintain that relief, even at the highest standards now obtaining anywhere, is too small to provide normal health conditions particularly among growing children. We are subjecting one-sixth of the population to the same semi-starvation that prevailed in Germany during the Great War. We shall be lucky if we do not produce the same stunted and twisted mentality that today is reflected in the sadistic excesses of Nazidom. On the whole, the fight for a decent minimum standard of life among the American unemployed must be waged by these "trouble makers" whom our administrators find so obnoxious. These are doing themselves, the unemployed and their country a singular disservice when they seek to terrorize such "trouble makers" into silence.

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EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

HAMILTON BASSO H. N. BRAILSFORD JOHN DEWEY
JOHN T. FLYNN WALDO FRANK E. C. LINDEMAN
W. P. MANGOLD R. G. TUGWELL LEWIS MUMFORD
JONATHAN MITCHELL

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The League in Action

WHEN ON the Feast of St. Francis the Italians bombed the town of Adowa, it was not merely a minor African state that endured a brutal aggression: the League of Nations suffered a defeat. This institution then consumed a week in reaching the conclusion that a Great Power had violated its Covenant. Geneva has taught us to expect this dilatory timidity. Through nine months of this year Il Duce has proclaimed his intention to embark on this war of conquest, and prepared it under our eyes. No single step has this League taken to prevent the outbreak of a war of which all the world knew within a few days the appointed day, and if it toyed with plans of conciliation, it knew in advance that they were destined to rejection. Throughout this period the citizens of all the League powers have drawn their profit from the sale to Italy of the supplies that would enable her to perpetrate this aggression; and this is true even of her hottest critics, of the British and the Soviet governments also.

The League will take its decision on sanctions while this article is crossing the Atlantic, but one risks little if he assumes that it will continue as it has begun. It will be dilatory and timid, because it is profoundly divided. The French have always regarded the League as little more than a means of enforcing the settlement of Versailles: they look on Italy as an ally: they resent the interested insistence of the British in this matter as a threat to their arrangements for encircling Germany. Torn by internal dissensions and doped by a venal press, they will continue to slow down and moderate the action of the League, and to grasp at every hint from Rome that Il Duce may one day welcome a compromise. Austria is tied as a protected vassal to Italy. Switzerland, though it is the League's seat, clings to its traditional neutrality. Spain, Hungary and Poland are at best indifferent. It may be that by financial and diplomatic pressure and by an appeal to the corporate feeling of the League, the British government can extort from the Assembly some support for economic sanctions, but it is reasonable to assume they will take a mild form, and that by some of the League's members they will be enforced half-heartedly, if at all.

In these conditions, economic sanctions, without the reinforcement of a naval blockade, can be only an irritating and useless gesture. Even if the League had been resolute and united, many awkward questions were certain to arise in the attempt to impose a partial embargo. Why should the Russians abstain from supplying Italy with oil, if she can draw this essential of victory from the United States? Why should Egypt cut off cotton, if America will supply it, or the British coal fields lose their market to Germany? The effect, in any event, of a partial and pacific embargo must be very slow. Italy will not be stinted for munitions, nor does she need, against a half-armed foe, armaments on the scale to which trench warfare accustomed us. Some gradual effect would certainly follow, not in Africa, but at home, if the markets of the League's members could be closed to all Italian imports. This would reduce in turn her capacity to buy. The dearth of raw materials would lead to massive unemployment and a lowering of the already low standard of life of the urban population. The consequent suffering and discontent might conceivably induce Il Duce to content himself with his spectacular victories and to accept a compromise in order to save his dictatorship at home.

But even this relatively cheerful forecast reckons too confidently on the solidarity of the League, and underestimates the power of propaganda to sustain fanaticism in time of war. At the best this calculation means that after one or two seasons of campaigning, financial stringency and domestic distress might bring Il Duce to conclude a peace ruinous to Ethiopia (though some fragments might survive under tutelage) and discreditable to the League. More than this one can hardly anticipate, so long as Italy has access (save for the purchase of munitions) to the American market, and can import through Germany all that she has the means to buy.

The logic of this situation leads then directly to naval action. Given American tolerance, a naval blockade could be made effective, though even here one grave difficulty has to be surmounted—that unless Austria can be detached from Germany, the land route to Central Europe would still remain open. The British advocates of naval action have, however, their expedient ready, the closing of the Suez Canal. This, indeed, the Convention formally forbids, but nothing in its text rules out measures that would serve as well: the stretching of a naval cordon, outside territorial waters, at either of its mouths. Reprisals are, doubtless, to be anticipated —attacks by sea planes and submarines on British commerce, the bombing of Malta, Cyprus and possibly Alexandria, and it may be a raid across the difficult Libyan deserts into Egypt.

This method, if the British fleet were to undertake it alone, would mean without disguise an Anglo-Italian war. A surprisingly large section of British public opinion is prepared for these extreme measures, though the wiser exponents of this view add the qualification that they would resort to naval action only if the French were to participate. That is a subtle way of saying No, which throws the responsibility for the anticipated failure of the

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League on M. Laval. There are, however, some, with Mr. Lloyd George at their head, who do contemplate single-handed British action, and it may be that the government had this possibility in mind when, without consulting the French or the League, it concentrated the battle fleet in the Mediterranean. An attempt would doubtless be made, when the inadequacy of milder sanctions was manifest, to wring from the League some mandate for the British fleet, but it is barely thinkable that the French would give even their passive approval to such a course, so long as M. Laval is Premier. In cold blood, at this stage of the affair, the balance of probability seems heavily against any British action of this kind, but as the months go by and the partial and pacific embargo fails to stop the war, the case for more decisive steps will present itself in a highly plausible shape. The League, it will be said, has staked its existence in this struggle with Il Duce. Will Englishmen hesitate, at a very moderate risk, to use their overwhelming naval power to save civilization?

Two sections of opinion may give the desired answer—the governing class, which realizes that Italian ambitions threaten the imperial sea-road to the East, and the devoted adherents of the League, who believe that a success won against Il Duce will breathe into it the breath of life. The former, who trust to instinct, are doubtless wise on their plane of national egoism; the latter cherish a pitiful delusion. If, after the League as a whole had exhibited its indifference and incapacity, the British fleet, to secure British strategical interests, were to score a success, the conclusion would not be that Geneva is omnipotent and the Covenant sacred. The conclusion would merely be that the British fleet is stronger than the Italian. In the light of that demonstration, we should all proceed to arm, some of us at sea and all of us in the air. But to naval action, unless some incident should provoke it, there will be no resort at this early stage of the conflict. Incidents, however, may occur, if an attempt should be made, with the approval of Geneva or of London, to supply the Ethiopians with arms.

How, then, in the early future, must one read the fortunes of Europe? It is improbable that the League will increase its prestige. Either it does nothing that could even look like the effective coercion of a rebel, or Italy quits it, shaking its solidarity as she does so. Rearmament will proceed everywhere with a fresh spurt, and realists will openly face what all in their private thoughts have long known to be the fact—that Europe maintains a precarious balance on the pre-war basis of rival alliances and armed power. This complex will certainly shift, and is already visibly unstable. It is doubtful whether the French have gained anything by their attempts to tie down the British government to a rigid loyalty to the Covenant in the event of a European dispute. Certainly they have extracted no clear pledges applicable to hypothetical cases. They cannot feel certain that London would show the same zeal for collective action, if Hitler were to violate the demilitarized zone, or if he were to occupy Memel, or even if he were to support a Nazi rising in Austria. In spite of much outward courtesy and continual consultation, the French view British policy on the whole with irritation and distrust, while the British retain their usual reserve in the face of the French preoccupation with the German peril. It is, as liberal Englishmen see it, a peril that the French daily aggravate, if, indeed, they did not create it.

This attitude explains the emphasis in Sir Samuel Hoare's recent Note on "elasticity" in the interpretation of treaty rights—a less contentious word than "revision." His reminder that there are "degrees of aggression," and that some forms of it are merely "negative" and therefore less culpable, opened up risky vistas of casuistry. All this is sound common sense. Hitler would commit a technical aggression, if he were to march a battalion of his own troops into Cologne: but must one react to it with an aerial bombardment, as one would if he seized Brussels? Memel is a solidly German town, which Lithuania snatched by expelling its French garrison. What would be the "degree of aggression," if Germany in the same way took back her own? The gravest of these marginal cases is, however, Austria, who might conceivably, if a free vote were possible, prove to have a Nazi majority in her despairing and humiliated population. In these cases and in some others, the public law of Europe is in flat contradiction with morals.

It results from the British Note that London in all such cases (though none was explicitly mentioned) contrives to combine loyalty to the Covenant with the right of private judgment. Some aggressions, to be plain, are relatively excusable, and not every aggression would set the British military machine in motion. In other words, British policy will work for "elasticity," reserving as its chief means of pressure the salutary doubt whether it will back a State that brings aggression on itself by obstinate rigidity. One may expound this attitude in liberal phraseology that warms the heart. On the plane of realism it means, however, that in this precarious European balance, British policy may lean at moments to the German side, in ways inconvenient to the French. If it does not suit Paris, under cover of the Covenant, to support British strategical interests in the Mediterranean without reserve, then London may show equal self-restraint if French strategical interests should be threatened on the Danube or the Rhine.

Some predict that the attempt of the League to discipline Il Duce will drive him into a Central European coalition of dissatisfied powers, which would unite round the main German mass—Poland, Austria and Hungary—with Japan ready in the distance to drive at Russia. History rarely works so logically, if only because the appetites of hungry powers are at times directed at each other. The

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prediction has, however, this justification, that whether in bluff or in earnest attempts are being made to pave the way for such a coalition. The French, however, may be trusted, while preserving a formal loyalty to the League, to resist and delay every step that would finally alienate Mussolini from themselves and the League system, conceived as a series of regional pacts for the isolation of Germany. That nation, if she has sagacity, will use any Italian approach to blackmail the League powers. If she meditates some "aggression" of a moderate degree of culpability, might she not do better to beg from London and extort from Paris a license to commit it, rather than strike a bargain with Rome?

Such a procedure would suit Sir Samuel Hoare's views on "elasticity" and the inclinations manifest in London since the naval agreement with Germany was signed. Starting with some colonial satisfaction (at the expense perhaps of Portugal), it would go on cautiously to approach European problems. There are doubtless positive steps that might be taken by the League powers to consolidate their system. If, for example, the Fascist regime in Austria openly prefers loyalty to Il Duce to its duty to the League, pressure of a kind familiar in the past might be used by London and Paris to restore Austrian democracy under a coalition of the Socialists with the Catholics of the left. If the Czechs, who feel themselves in extreme danger, were to support it, that chimera, a Danubian federation, might become a dim possibility.

It is, however, improbable that Paris and London can combine in any large program of qualified liberalism. Both will arm. Paris will cling to Moscow and strive to retain her subterranean links with Rome. Moscow will play for safety in rigidity. British policy, after hesitating before the temptation of naval action, may in the end acquiesce in the League's impotence, and retire to a relative isolation, qualified by empire. But isolation in England's case can only be relative, and the lonely nation after this experience may tend to satisfy her social instincts as often in Berlin as in Paris. A world war may not be imminent, but on this anarchy which of us would bestow the name of peace?

London. H. N. BRAILSFORD.

Civil War in the A.F. of L.

IN ATLANTIC CITY the American Federation of Labor has just concluded the stormiest and perhaps most momentous convention in its history. It was momentous because it marked a virtual declaration of war between the old guard, entrenched in the craft unions, and the progressive element, fighting for the right of workers in mass-production industries to be organized into industrial unions. The issue was not a new one, to be sure, but it split the convention wide open and overshadowed everything else.

The reason this split came into the open at Atlantic City was that here, for the first time in many years, the progressive forces were able to muster the support of more than a third of the convention vote. Not enough votes to win, but sufficient to force the fight and to prevent steamroller tactics. The result was an extended, acrimonious debate the like of which has rarely been seen or heard in a labor convention. It left no doubt that the division between the two groups was sharp, fundamental and increasing in intensity. Most significant of all, it put genuine fear into the hearts of the old guard. Here, for the first time in decades, they saw a serious challenge to their authority and prestige. Their reaction to this threat was characteristic of a group about to be deprived of a vested right. They locked their minds in logic-tight compartments and proclaimed in the best manner of Liberty Leaguers that they would fight to the death any attempt to whittle one iota from the craft jurisdictions guaranteed them by the constitution (in this instance, the A.F. of L.'s). The old guard had the votes to enforce its view, to prevent the formation of any industrial unions, by roughly 18,000 to 11,000. But as these figures indicate, more than a third of the Federation's members—more than a million, in actual numbers—were demanding the right to organize along industrial, rather than craft, lines. It is unlikely they will take no for an answer. That is why the Atlantic City convention ended on a note of civil war.

To understand the nature of this civil war—and such it is likely to be—it is necessary to review the background leading up to this year's convention. The issue of industrial unionism came to the floor for debate because the Executive Council of the A.F. of L. had failed to carry out a mandate of last year's San Francisco convention. This mandate, it is true, was not clear cut. It provided that the Executive Council should issue industrial charters for national or international unions in the automotive, cement, aluminum and other mass-production industries but that, at the same time, existing craft organizations should be protected. Obviously, this was a compromise, but the progressive trade unionists hoped that it would be a practicable one. They saw in it a realization by the A.F. of L. that its traditional policy of trying to organize the workers in mass-production industries along craft lines had been wholly ineffective and that if they were to be organized at all it would have to be in the form

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of industrial unions comparable to that of the United Mine Workers in the coal industry. This could be done without hurting the existing craft unions, since their position in these industries was either negligible or non-existent. There was, moreover, a good reason for immediate action. Under the impetus furnished by the New Deal, hundreds of local trade and federal labor unions (industrial in character and affiliated directly to the A.F. of L.) had come into existence almost spontaneously in industries hitherto unorganized. The members of these unions were clamoring to be united in national or international unions with broad industrial charters.

But in the hands of the Executive Council, overwhelmingly controlled by the craft interests, the program adopted at San Francisco was sabotaged and industrial charters were not issued. Instead, the council took the view that the newly formed federal labor unions in the mass-production field were merely recruiting agencies for the crafts. Thus, wherever the federal unions, through strikes or otherwise, were able to establish themselves as agencies of collective bargaining, they were subjected to the hazard of "raids" from the strong craft unions demanding that members be surrendered to them. Where international unions were established, in automobiles and rubber, the workers were forced to accept charters limited in scope and protecting the jurisdictions of the craft unions.

The demoralizing effect this selfish policy had upon the workers, who were willing to be organized but unwilling to be divided among a score of unions, is suggested in the report of the Executive Council for the past year. There one learns that 586 of these local unions were either permanently disbanded or suspended during the year. As against this, the 1,650 organizers of the A.F. of L. succeeded in adding only 272 new unions—leaving a deficit of 314 unions. In the automotive industry, it is significant to note, the resentment caused by the reactionary stand of the Executive Council left a fertile field for Father Coughlin, who promptly sponsored an independent industrial union of his own. Despite the known anti-labor attitude of Coughlin, his union is estimated to have a membership virtually as large as that of the A.F. of L.'s International.

It was on the basis of this record that the proponents of industrial unionism came to the Atlantic City convention demanding a showdown. What they learned, of course, was that the declaration at San Francisco was meaningless and that the old guard had never intended to sanction genuine industrial unions. If it voted a slight promise of that nature, it was only to repudiate it later. Accordingly, when twenty-one resolutions were presented at Atlantic City calling specifically for the setting up of industrial unions in various industries and the issue could no longer be evaded, the answer of William Green and his colleagues was emphatic and unequivocal: no industrial unions. Thus the delegations from the cement, rubber, radio, automobile and other federal unions, who voted 329 to 15 for industrial charters, must return home to their members with the bitter news that they cannot be organized into the kind of union they want—at least not under the A.F. of L. Will they be able to convince their members that, even so, it is worth staying in the A.F. of L. and paying high per-capita dues? Or will next year's Executive Council report record a vast secession movement?

From the obstinacy of the die-hard craft unionists, one might assume that they would not view such a secession unfavorably. They have shown, at any rate, that they are not greatly concerned over the organization of the unorganized in the big industries. In 1934, for example, when the strike wave swept the country, the Federation collected nearly $400,000 from the local and federal unions and placed about $133,000 of this in a strike-defense fund. But of this amount it paid out in strike benefits only $1,084—of which $1,000 went into legal fees. The record during the past year was slightly better, but not of a sort to indicate aggressive organization. It is improbable that most of the elders of the A.F. of L. would go so far as Daniel Tobin, tsar of the Teamsters' Union, went last year when he called the mass of unskilled workers "rubbish," yet it is clear that they have shown no real desire to organize this group. No doubt they are aware that many of the potential leaders of these mass-production workers are young, militant and progressive, and no doubt they deem it unwise to build up these forces to the point where they might—and almost certainly would—lead a revolt against the present regime. This is not very complimentary, but it is the best that can be said of the great majority on the Executive Council today.

Events in Europe, especially Hitler's ruthless destruction of the German trade unions, strangely disturbed even the die-hards of the Federation. They voted for a continuation of the boycott of Nazi goods, for non-participation in the Olympics in Berlin next year, and for a labor chest to aid the trade-union victims of Nazi terrorism. Matthew Woll, in reading a report on atrocities suffered by German labor leaders, choked with emotion. Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia was condemned as a lawless conquest "by the Fascist regime and its notorious dictator." Yet here at home Mr. Woll and Mr. Green and their associates hobnobbed with the Commander of the American Legion and applauded his Red-baiting utterances, apparently oblivious to the fact that of such stuff fascism is made. Nor could they see the imperative need for labor to make special efforts to organize and enlist the support of the agricultural workers, the unemployed and the youth. A resolution designed to condemn the use of the National Guard in labor struggles was garbled by Chairman Woll of the Resolutions Committee into an approval of the use of troops if they were "neutral."

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Fortunately, such inconsistencies as these were remorselessly exposed by the strong progressive bloc. Led by Lewis of the United Mine Workers, this group included the ablest and sharpest minds at the convention: Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Gorman of the United Textile Workers, Dubinsky of the Ladies' Garment Workers, Martel and Howard of the Typographical Union, Peterson of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers and many of the younger delegates from the local and federal labor unions. It was this group —especially Lewis with his 4,000 votes—that upset the plans of the Executive Council to amend the Federation's constitution to bar Communists from membership in any union. The resolution, as finally passed, merely pertained to delegates to state and central labor bodies and was so worded as to be of little significance.

The progressives were able to poll a strong minority vote for a Labor Party and forced through a number of desirable resolutions: (1) putting the Federation on record as favoring a constitutional amendment to permit Congress to enact minimum wage and social-security legislation; (2) calling for a federal investigation of strike-breaking detective agencies; (3) condemning Governor McNutt's use of martial law in Terre Haute and also the anti-labor policy of the Kohler Company in Wisconsin; (4) prohibiting any officer of the A.F. of L. from being a member of the anti-labor, Red-baiting National Civic Federation.

But despite the encouraging strength and unity shown by the progressives, the next year is bound to be a hard one. Their problem will be to strengthen their forces for the next convention. But how can this be done when the main source of their support—new industrial unions—will be lost to them? The bitter conflict on industrial unionism, climaxed by a fist fight on the convention floor between Lewis of the miners and Hutcheson of the carpenters, is not likely to subside. On the contrary, the craft unions will probably be more alert and guard their jurisdictions more jealously than ever before. Perhaps the industrial unionists will carry on within the Federation against heavy odds, or perhaps they will decide that the air outside is healthier and more conducive to real trade unionism. Certainly the signs at present point that way.

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

Atlantic City.

Spying on the Jobless[1]

Tsarist Methods in New York City

CIVIL LIBERTY and domestic peace are menaced today by the growing conflict between the authorities and the unemployed. Relief has never been adequate. The policy of the Roosevelt administration, as of our state and city governments, is to cut it even further. Prices are going up. Relief checks are going down. The organizations of the unemployed are gaining strength and the various factions of the left are drawing closer together. Employing interests want relief cut in order to be able to cut wages. But the jobless will not take reductions lying down. And public officials who are unwilling to increase relief are finding it more and more necessary to use force and espionage to break the pressure from below.

A suppressed document, photostats of which are in the possession of The New York Post, makes it possible to get a glimpse of the terror that is slowly being built up against the unemployed. This document deals with conditions in New York City. When he was in Congress, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia of New York distinguished himself by his defense of the underdog and befriended the Hunger Marchers when they were in Washington. His Welfare Commissioner, William Hodson, is a social worker of long experience and rather liberal reputation. But both of them have ignored the recommendations of the mayor's own (quite conservative) committee on unemployment relief. The committee found that relief allowances were 40 percent below the minimum standard of private charities, and suggested a considerable increase. But Mayor LaGuardia wants to reduce the "relief burden," *i.e.,* shift it to the backs of the unemployed. In New York City, with its militant radical and liberal elements, this cannot be done without a fight.

Our story begins on July 9, 1934, when Mr. Alexander Taylor, then executive secretary of the Association of Office and Professional Emergency Employees, an organization of workers on relief projects, charged in The New York Post that fifty people on a so-called "Red" list had been dropped from work projects at New York University and the College of the City of New York. These charges were denied by Welfare Commissioner Hodson in the same article. He said he had never seen such a list and that the people dropped had been discharged because of inefficiency or physical disability, not because of so-called "radical" activities. Mr. Taylor then accused Commissioner Hodson of "monstrous hypocrisy or gross ignorance," and challenged him to a public hearing. The challenge

[1] An editorial commenting on this article appears on page 323 of this issue. A letter by Commissioner William Hodson appears on page 336.—THE EDITORS.

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was never accepted, but on July 17, unknown to the public, Mr. Nels Anderson, assistant to the chief engineer of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, asked Mr. Frederick I. Daniels, executive director of the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration of New York State, to investigate the charges made. A report, "Re Discrimination Against Alleged 'Radicals' by the New York City Relief Administration," was presented by the T.E.R.A. Division of Information and Review on September 20, 1934. It was never made public, but vague reports of such a document were heard. Certain excerpts have now been published in The New York Post, which called for Commissioner Hodson's resignation.

The T.E.R.A. investigators who made the report started with the President's pledge in his Hyde Park speech that his relief program would have

> nothing to do with party and nothing to do with section, trying to be square to all, Republicans and Democrats and Socialists, and everybody else, no matter what they may call themselves, no matter to what party or church they may belong

and from that basis sought "to determine if certain explicit F.E.R.A. and T.E.R.A. principles or policies were being contravened." On August 13, 1934, a representative of the T.E.R.A. interviewed Commissioner Hodson. We quote from the T.E.R.A. report:

> T.E.R.A. Representative: "Mr. Commissioner, we would like to have for our files, a copy of your list of agitators and trouble-makers at C.C.N.Y. [College of the City of New York], N.Y.U. [New York University] and Columbia University."
>
> Commissioner: "I haven't such a list."
>
> T.E.R.A. Representative: "Who do you think has the list?"
>
> Commissioner: "The Police Department."
>
> T.E.R.A. Representative: "Do I have to go to the Police Department to get it? Have you any means of helping me to obtain it?"
>
> Commissioner: "Yes—wait a moment."
>
> He picked up a receiver and called [Deputy Welfare] Commissioner Howe. Mr. Howe invited me to his office. I showed him Mr. Daniels' letter and explained the object of my mission.
>
> Mr. Howe said:
>
> "In coöperation with the Police Department, we obtained the lists of names of professional agitators. [At first, he said professional agitators, Communists, and then asked me to cross out the word Communists.]
>
> "Two of our special investigators and some investigators of the Alien Squad of the New York City police were assigned to this task. They went around to different projects, talking to work supervisors, etc. They finally compiled a list of names of professional agitators—that is, of those agitating on work time and those threatening that they would force their way into these [Department of Welfare] offices."
>
> Commissioner Howe then handed the T.E.R.A. representative a copy of a list headed as follows:
>
> "List of 179 persons submitted by supervisors as being agitators and organizers on the various relief projects."

The report goes on to give copies of letters and memoranda from supervisors submitting lists of "agitators" to their superiors on instructions from above. The investigators found that "almost without exception" the lists were made up of the names of active members of jobless and work-relief organizations such as the Associated Office and Professional Emergency Employees and the Federation of Architects, Chemists, Engineers and Technicians.

The investigators found a wide difference of opinion as to the definitions used to determine whether a worker was to be included on an "agitators' " list. Commissioner Hodson said they were "people who refuse to be gentlemen." Deputy Commissioner Howe pictured them as publicity hounds who attack unarmed policemen. Miss Grace Gosselin, deputy director of the Works Division, said, "An agitator is a person who stirs things up. A radical is a person who wants to change conditions and is a Communist." One termed radicals "eccentrics." Another cited nudists as "extreme" radicals. A third said "a radical is anyone who is against the government," a definition that might include Ogden Mills. Still another told the investigators that "agitators feed on layoffs. If there were some way to stop layoffs, there would be no more agitators. Not long ago I got an order over the telephone from my boss, Mr. Maples, to make up a list of radicals. He got the same order from someone higher up and he from someone still higher up and where that order originally emanated from, I find it impossible to trace. However, I recognize my boss's voice over the telephone and I obey orders." The investigators found that "the term Communist was sedulously avoided, evidently because the official use of this word does not point to a given disruptive act and would therefore supply watchful critics with proof of political discrimination against a legal political party, thus giving color to the charge of unconstitutional and un-American attitudes, not to say practices, on the part of the New York City Relief Administration."

As for police methods:

> In the hands of the Bureau of Criminal Information of the New York police, as is witnessed by the police records, not all law-abiding citizens, to be sure, are *ipso facto* law-abiding. Sharp surveillance and espionage methods, commonly employed in the detection of felons, are used concerning so-called "radicals" on work relief, apparently with the connivance and avowed aid of the confidential agents of the Department of Public Welfare. Indeed it would seem that covert and circuitous reprisals are instituted for public demonstrations, organizing, etc., the latter specifically permitted by F.E.R.A. and T.E.R.A. policy and rulings, which lead in some cases to indictment and perhaps to prison sentence.

Exhibit 7 is a copy of police records from the files of one of these confidential investigators for the Department of Welfare. It is by a city detective and is titled "Agitators on Home and Work Relief

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Rolls." The date is July 16, 1934. The four men referred to in the report were leaders in their respective organizations: Sullivan in the Unemployment Councils; Gaynor [a former Fusionist supporter of LaGuardia who sprang into the headlines when the mayor, receiving him at the head of a delegation of the unemployed, called him a "Yellow Dog"] in the United Action Committee; Fox and Taylor in the Association of Office and Professional Emergency Employees.

> 2. Investigation Re: Richard Sullivan.
>
> The investigation on this subject shows that he is residing at 147 East Sixteenth Street, New York City, with one Frieda Jackson who he states is his wife but of which marriage there is no record on file in New York City.[1] It is suggested that the investigator of the Home Relief Bureau now giving cash aid to the subject, compel him to give proof of such marriage. I am informed by Mr. George Lynch of the Home Relief Precinct No. 17, which is handling the relief given the subject, that common-law marriages are recognized by the Home Relief Bureau and same relief given as to those persons who are legally married. In view of these facts it is requested that Director Corsi of the Home Relief Bureau make recommendation as to the removal or retention of this subject on relief.
>
> 3. Investigation Re: William Fox.
>
> This subject is residing at 2174 Twenty-ninth Street, Astoria, Long Island, with his brother and sister-in-law and their two children. He is single and from investigation has no dependents and does not show *need* as required by Department of Public Welfare for those seeking employment in Works Division. Would suggest that Investigators White and McCormack, who are familiar with this investigation, continue on this subject with a view of recommending his removal from relief.
>
> 4. Investigation Re: James A. Gaynor.
>
> Thorough investigation of this subject did not reveal any violation of law committed by him in obtaining relief. Would suggest that Supervisor of project where he is employed report any and all disobedience of orders, incompetency, etc., on the part of this subject and then drop him from work-relief rolls.
>
> 5. Investigation Re: Alexander Taylor.
>
> Thorough investigation of this subject fails to reveal any violation of law committed by him in obtaining relief. Would suggest same recommendation as in paragraph 4 as to this subject.
>
> 6. The writer [*i. e.*, the city detective making this report] was assisted during the entire investigation of these subjects by Confidential Investigators White and McCormack of Deputy Commissioner Howe's staff of the Department of Public Welfare and will state that without their coöperation this investigation could not have been made.

The investigators give a very revealing report in the case of Mr. X—— and his wife, Miss Y——. He was a sculptor; she, a free-lance artist. They first appear in city records when they applied for home relief on December 13, 1933. They had lost their savings in the closing of the Bank of United States, and the home-relief investigator who checked their application for relief described them as "of a very fine type and feel very keenly the fact that they have to apply to charity." Both finally obtained jobs on a works project, although relief rules forbid more than one job per family. They attracted the attention of the authorities by becoming active in organizational work. Detectives shadowed them night and day at the request of the relief officials in the attempt to find some excuse to drop them from the rolls.

On July 11, 1934, both were arrested as they were dressing for work "and after being confronted with the evidence that they were living together as man and wife and both on relief rolls, they admitted the truth of these facts and stated that they did this because they were in want and destitute. The defendant resisted arrest at the time of apprehension and was subdued by Detective Clune and treated at this office for laceration of scalp." They were charged with perjury and obtaining relief in a fraudulent manner, and held in $1,250 bail each. On July 17 they were dropped from relief. The case, so far as the writer knows, was never brought to trial, although at least one indictment was obtained. Apparently the facts were too raw for the legal authorities.

The T.E.R.A. investigators found that "the evidence shows that the original motives for the incisive surveillance of these two workers was based on their agitation and endeavors as members of an employees' union." The investigators cite T.E.R.A. rules which forbid discrimination for organizational activities, but find "irrefutable evidence, documentary and other, to the effect that the Department of Public Welfare does foster a policy of discrimination against vocal or militant members of certain organizations—'contentious' is a word often used—and that the latter are proscribed on certain lists, called 'agitators' lists, which are turned over to the New York City Police."

Has there been a change in city policy since that time? The available evidence indicates that espionage, persecution and discrimination continue, although Victor Ridder, successor to General Johnson as head of the W.P.A., has announced that relief clients will not be penalized because of their radical beliefs, and that if he finds a "special intelligence squad" used to investigate Red activities, he will dismiss it. If he does so, it will represent a sharp change in existing policy. Six months after the T.E.R.A. report, described above, was presented and suppressed, the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment Relief reported:

> The stated policy of the Emergency Relief Bureau toward associations and unions is that there shall be no discrimination against any employee for his organizational interest or activity so long as such activity is not engaged in during office hours. It has been found that in quite a number of instances this stated policy is not adhered to by the Emergency Relief Bureau. Employees have been dismissed and transfers have been made from

[1] We of course do not need to point out that there are many thousands of married couples in New York City of whose marriages there is no local record.—THE EDITORS.

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one precinct or project to another in order to weaken organizational activity. *Active union organizers have been subjected to special surveillance.* This practice has been carried to such an extent that in some districts legitimate organizational activity has been drastically curtailed and even stopped by the action of the bureau.

And General Johnson, just before retiring as work-relief director for New York, announced that he was going to make public the report of his own "intelligence squad." Later he backed down. Here is part of the stenographic report of his press conference on October 9:

Q. "I think it would make a good story if you would let us know something about this Intelligence Department report."

A. "You can't take an intelligence department and make a news story out of it, because it isn't any good at all."

Q. "How many have you got in this gumshoe system?"

[No answer.]

Later Q. "How much spying do you encourage the spies to do?"

General Johnson: "You go to hell!"

Yet one of Johnson's last rulings was that, outside of the A.F. of L. building trades, he would recognize no unions unless their delegates brought a list of signatures of workers who authorized these representatives to speak for them in collective bargaining. Each signature was to carry the name and number of the project on which the worker was employed. Under such a system, no spies are needed.

ISIDOR FEINSTEIN.

Off to Ethiopia

The New Republic vouches for the authenticity of the following letter written by an American seaman.—THE EDITORS.

DEAR Boss: The last time I came through the Mediterranean I was on a nine-knot freighter which plodded painfully from Port Said to New York with no calls en route. This ship is a Mediterranean ferry-boat with most satisfactory ports of call. Highlight thus far was Naples. I refused the trip to Pompeii and Vesuvius to stay on and near the dock, for we were tied up at the military pier and alongside the "Belvedere" was loading troops for Eritrea. All day under a roaring sun the troops were checked off and, bent under their heavy gear, streamed slowly up the gangway. And the crowd outside the gates steadily grew until at 6 P.M., when the "Belvedere" let go its lines, at least three thousand civilians were cheering and sobbing and straining for a last glimpse of some soldier dear to them. Not until the last moment were the gates opened to release the rush of the crowd so that it could come alongside the already departing ship.

I had never before seen a troop ship leave and I was hungry for details. Much of it seemed unreal to me and, although I knew how unworthy was the thought, overdrawn and cheaply dramatic. The feeling persisted that all this was but a rehearsal scene for a second-rate war movie, with the director using all the time-honored gags and props for tear-jerking. Red eyes and much weeping on all sides, of course. There was a lad, no older than a college sophomore, embracing a hysterical mother, who, at the point of leave-taking, fainted away. The boy went an unfleshly gray, moaned and sank beside her. They carried him aboard ship. And a woman, so choked up that sobs had difficulty in finding jerky relief, about seven months pregnant and leaning heavily and stupidly against one of the warehouses. And another soldier, blond and blue-eyed (I've never seen so many Swedish-looking Italians!) who at the top of the gangway suddenly paused and dashed down again, running wildly for the gate. The men looked at him dumbly, but the officers promptly closed in about him and a guard escorted him back. And babies sobbing with fright in pitiful imitation of their mothers. Through it all a band playing martial airs very loudly and poorly.

The "Urania," a hospital ship back from the African coast, docked about noon, just forward of the "Belvedere." Only a comparatively few officers and men came off immediately. It was not until 7 P. M., after the "Belvedere" had left, that a stream of ambulances roared down to the piers and opened their doors for those broken before a shot had been fired. But most interesting were the grim boxes hoisted out of the forward hold and loaded onto trucks, filled with the bodies of men fallen before malaria, fever and disease. Just before we sailed that evening for Alexandria, we noticed a group of women, about two hundred or more, standing in the long shed opposite the hospital ship. I have been a seaman too long not to recognize this type of woman, but I was confused by the fact that "Urania" officers were checking their names and that these women had bundles and suitcases with them. It was Jake at the Princess Bar who confirmed our suspicions.

"Yeh," he said. "Mussolini called for volunteers from the houses all through Italy. Them nigger women down there were pullin' Jack-the-Ripper stuff, an' the boys are hungry for home talent. That's the second batch leavin'. They're paid a flat wage by the government and some get bonuses."

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The next morning at sunrise we passed the "Belvedere" out at sea, off the Sicily shore. I was on watch and saw the decks heavily lined with the brown-uniformed men and reaching up the masts like long, nervous fingers. They shouted at us and waved. I could not help but wave back, and felt that I was not cheering their mission but greeting them as fellow men. We had laughed with them the day before and had shouted back and forth across the decks when we had been tied up alongside each other. We had thrown them packs of cigarettes and they had cheered us and had sung for us. Even when Olie and a few of the old M.W.I.U. men had stolidly answered their Fascist salutes with the clenched fist of the Soviet, they booed and laughed good-naturedly. For a while I had difficulty in sorting out my emotions and trying to put them back into their proper categories.

Since then we've been to Alexandria and Palestine and Syria and we've seen the highly impressive rows of battleships and airplane-carriers which Great Britain has concentrated at the Suez, even to extending her ships and fortifications to Haifa. Yesterday we were in Livorno and saw a grim Italian battle-wagon in dry dock with the blue flare of acetylene torches playing about her hull and superstructure. Already the Italians are taking precautions and have flung a submarine net across the entrance to the harbor, and as we were leaving last night, trying to squeeze through the narrow space allotted us, we almost ran aground. We cleared it by less than a fathom. The mate was wild.

The night before a few of us went up San Martino mountain to see the bay and city at night —a magnificent panorama. We had a guide, everyone has a guide in Naples. I spoke with him of the coming war. His class was to be called the next week and he was to go. Why? I wanted to know. "Because Mussolini wants me." Simply, flatly. Did he want to go? He shrugged his shoulders. What difference would *that* make? None, of course, although it is said that about a month ago more than fifty of the crew of the "Rex" jumped ship in New York—and since then shore-leave in America has been forbidden. How long would the war last? A short time; perhaps a week, perhaps two. One grand push, that was all. Then he spoke of the "nigger animals" of Ethiopia and how simple it would be to overwhelm them. The attitude was one of good-natured contempt; a more bitter hostility seemed directed against John Bull.

Aboard ship we have the most dispassionate wireless reports, but each one seems to draw the United States nearer to the conflict. I am surprised to find the unanimity of protest among the crew. None wants to go to war; many accept it as inevitable and frankly say they will sabotage or run from it. Others insist they will never sign on a ship that transports munitions. I wonder if these intentions will withstand the onslaught of directed propaganda. I often wonder what I will do.

"S.S. ——," Genoa, Italy. JACK HARRIS.

Washington Notes

British Propagandists Go into Action—Coöperate with England and Trade Will Boom—Mr. Hull Isn't Having Any

WITH THE voting of sanctions against Italy by the League, the British propaganda organization in Washington went swiftly and smoothly into action. During the last ten days, there have been dozens of earnest little conversations at hotel cocktail bars and private dinners in which the British position in the Italo-Ethiopian dispute has been confidentially explained. Most often the propagandist is one of the British who is not directly attached to the Embassy. The propagandist feels grieved, it develops, that America should think that England is acting primarily in behalf of her own imperial interests. To be sure, it happens that British interests would be served if Italy could be kept from seizing western Ethiopia and the upper valley of the Blue Nile, and from constructing a military base at Massawa on the Red Sea, athwart the route to India. But you are entreated to believe that such considerations are irrelevant, and to remember only that England is standing for peace by collective action.

The task of British propaganda in this country is comparatively easy, since many of our so-called community leaders—corporation lawyers, industrialists, professors in Eastern universities—are already committed to collective action. In the last few days, former Secretary of State Stimson has published a two-and-a-half-column letter in The New York Times urging the need of coöperation with other nations, and Ambassador-at-Large Norman H. Davis has made a similar plea before a meeting sponsored by The New York Herald Tribune. By the nature of the present European crisis, coöperation with other nations means support for England. While it is doubtful that prosperity seeps from the top downwards, it is certain that propaganda does, and it is likely that the arguments of Colonel Stimson and Mr. Davis will shortly be repeated in hundreds of newspaper editorials, lectures and public discussions.

The arguments of British propaganda, as I have heard them, are framed to appeal primarily to business men. The need of business everywhere in the world, say the British, is peace. The problem of peace in Europe centers around Mussolini and Hitler. The method advocated by France of meeting this problem is to hold down Hitler by force, while at the same time letting Mussolini do as he pleases on condition that he will aid in the encirclement of Germany. The British declare that this method will not work. They maintain that rather than submit to force, Hitler will eventually fight, and the resulting war will ruin European business—and with it, world business—for a generation. Moreover, they point out that Mussolini, running wild, is only slightly less dangerous than Hitler caged up. Quite apart from his Ethiopian adventure, they point to his years of meddling in the Balkans, his intrigues in Greece and threats to Turkey.

The way in which the British propose to deal with the crisis is to stand stoutly against violent outbursts on the part of Mussolini and Hitler while simultaneously offering

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them small concessions. They point out that they voluntarily ceded part of Jubaland to Italy, and that last spring Captain Eden was prepared to come to a generous arrangement with Mussolini concerning Ethiopia. During the time that Stresemann was German Foreign Minister, they repeatedly forced the French to yield to Germany on small issues, and in that period Europe enjoyed the best business —and America the largest export trade—since the World War. Had not the French obstinately refused all aid to Germany at the time of the Hoover moratorium in 1931, Hitler might never have become Reichsführer, and at least part of America's long-term investments in Germany might have been salvaged.

The conclusion of this argument, as you might suspect, is that America should join England in embargoing imports from Italy, and later modify its present neutrality law so that embargoes can be laid upon only one party to a dispute. It is accompanied by a plea that Americans should recognize the practical wisdom of England's European policy, and agree to support it during the next five or ten perilous years. It is broadly implied that "the two great Anglo-Saxon democracies" are the only two nations with either good sense or good will.

As I have said, this propaganda is having a large degree of success. When the British claim that their European policy has, on the whole, been more far-seeing than that of France, they have a valid point. The weakness of their argument, in my opinion, is the contention that England, even with American support, can save Europe from eventual war. Unless we are convinced of the success of English policy, we obviously ought to stay as far away from Europe as possible. No one knows whether Europe is doomed to war or not, but not even British propagandists can say, with any conviction, that European peace is a good risk.

The most ambitious attempt of the British to obtain American support was made by Sir Samuel Hoare in his transatlantic broadcast last week. Nearly all his time on the air was devoted to buttering up Secretary of State Hull. Mr. Hull's ideas about peace are highly definite. For years he has believed that low tariffs meant peace, and high tariffs war. The world's tariffs are now close to the highest point they have ever reached, and it to be expected, in Mr. Hull's opinion, that we are experiencing war crises. Beginning with the London economic conference in 1932, Mr. Hull has made several proposals to England for tariff negotiations, all of which have been flatly refused by Neville Chamberlain, England's Chancellor of the Exchequer. Consequently, Mr. Hull has viewed England's professed devotion to peace with considerable skepticism. Last week, Sir Samuel Hoare fulsomely embraced Mr. Hull's low-tariff "gospel," as he called it, and paid warm tribute to Mr. Hull's consistency and liberalism. He carefully refrained from committing England to any specific action, but in spirit his speech was a complete reversal of the brusque economic nationalism enunciated by Mr. Chamberlain in the past.

How far British officials in Washington reflect opinion in London I cannot say, but I have found among the British here an extraordinarily bitter feeling towards Mussolini personally. They say that England will not consider the Ethiopian crisis settled until Mussolini is overturned. There was an oddly fierce flare-up recently when newspapers reproduced photographs of four maps, in inlaid marble, which Mussolini has had placed on the Basilica of Constantine on the Via dell' Impero in Rome. The maps show the growth of the Roman empire, and the fourth of them shows England as tributary to Rome. It will be a long time before the British here forgive Mussolini for that.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

A Legal Extravaganza Starring John W. Davis—Supported by Several Holding Companies—Dr. Lautenbach Scores as Stooge

SOME WEEKS ago a law suit sprang up in a Baltimore United States Court. The occasion was made memorable by the appearance of no less imposing a legal luminary than Mr. John W. Davis, as the lawyer for an obscure Baltimore dentist. This dentist was the owner of what had once been $2,500 worth of bonds of the American States Public Service Company. But in the great Hoover wash they had shrunk to $400. Now the dentist, with his $400 worth of bonds, was in the United States Court. He had intervened in an ordinary reorganization proceeding, and was thundering that the public-utilities act was unconstitutional and demanding that the court hold it to be so. The great John W. Davis appeared for him.

The government attorneys present were full of suspicions, as government lawyers will be, of this proceeding. Mr. John Burns, representing the S.E.C., intimated that it was a collusive proceeding—a comedy to put the government on the spot and hurry the utilities act to the bone-yard without giving the government a fair chance to defend it. Mr. Burns intimated that Mr. Davis is a very high-priced lawyer who charges by the word and uses mostly two-dollar words and that he couldn't understand how this dentist with his $400 stake was going to pay for all those expensive words. Indeed, he said right out that he believed Mr. Davis' real client was the Edison Electric Institute and a brace of powerful holding companies.

These dark implications irked the great lawyer. His ordinarily red face grew visibly redder. He rebuked Mr. Burns and suggested that his charge would be contemptible even in a Massachusetts magistrate's court. You see, a magistrate's court is one in which human rights are decided, as contrasted with a high civil court, where the more important questions of property are dealt with. And you can imagine Mr. Davis' contempt for a magistrate's court.

The newspapers carried some accounts of this little comedy, but quite garbled and inadequate, as is their wont. So I got the record—a voluminous bundle of typed sheets —and read the whole story. It resolves itself into the tale of a great lawyer in search of a client. And it is invaluable as a case study for the budding attorney who wishes to perfect himself in that most important branch of adjective law which might be classified as tactics. So let us look at a great lawyer in action.

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The American States Public Service Company is a holding company. It is bankrupt. Its affairs are in a United States Court in Baltimore in reorganization under Section 77b. The trustees were working on a plan of reorganization. But the plan had not been adopted yet. Then the famous utilities holding-company bill was passed. The trustees immediately concluded that that law rendered the plan they were fabricating impossible. What to do? They decided to go into the court and ask the judge for instructions. Is the utility act constitutional? If it is, then what course shall they follow? If it is not? Then all will be well. But they insist they must know. And they insist further that the act is unconstitutional and ask the court so to rule. This is an ex-parte proceeding with only the lawyers for the trustees before the court. These lawyers are also lawyers for a number of holding companies interested in having this law knocked into a cocked hat.

The proceedings thus outlined were filed September 16. The same day a Baltimore dentist intervenes in the proceeding. He is represented by John W. Davis. He also prays that the court hold the act unconstitutional, as otherwise he will suffer irreparable damage. Now we have two parties before the court, both asking that the law be annulled. Both parties are represented by utility holding-company lawyers. Mr. Davis had been retained by the Edison Electric Institute to lead the court fight against the law. But that same day another intervener appears—Burco, Inc. This is a corporation that owns $150,000 worth of bonds in the bankrupt utility. It joins the others in praying for a decision on the constitutionality of the law, but asks that it be declared constitutional. Ah, ha! the law now has a champion. But who? Burco, Inc., is represented by a lawyer who is also a utility lawyer. His firm represents International Utilities. He was opposed to the utilities bill. He declared he had never favored its fundamental philosophy. But as soon as the bill was passed, he declared, he changed his mind and decided it was not only constitutional, but a good law.

"What were the factors that you recollect as affecting your change of mind?" asked Judge Burns of the S.E.C.

The lawyer: "I don't know."

Burns: "It is pretty hard to answer?"

The lawyer: "It is pretty hard to answer. I can't tell."

He had been stricken with conversion like Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. But this was the counsel who now appeared to do battle against Brother Davis in behalf of the law.

As matters stood now, there were three parties in court—the trustees, represented by utility lawyers, and the dentist represented by a great utility lawyer attacking the law, and Burco, Inc., owned by a utility holding company, represented by another utility lawyer, defending the law. The government was not represented. It could not intervene. Its counsel could come in as *amicus curiae,* but if the court failed to reciprocate that friendship and decided for the utilities, the government would have no right of appeal. Furthermore, the case would be submitted on a statement of facts in which the counsel defending the law admitted all the facts, or most of them, alleged by the trustees.

The *pièce de résistance* of this beautiful burlesque was the manner in which the great Mr. Davis came by his client. The government had charged that there had been what looked like collusion between the trustees and Mr. Davis in cooking up an alleged piece of litigation in which the real party in interest, the Edison Electric Institute, did not actually appear. And so they demanded to know where Mr. Davis dug up the dentist. It turned out that he had been dug up, not by Mr. Davis, but by the lawyers for the trustees of the company in whose suit Mr. Davis appeared, ostensibly representing an independent party. The lawyer for the trustee got a Baltimore broker to go out and find a client for Mr. Davis to represent. The Edison Institute wanted to intervene to fight the law. But it had no interest to intervene. Someone with an interest had to be found to be the legal stooge. The lawyer for the trustee explained to the broker that everything was ready. There was a lawyer ready to represent the intervener. But alas, the lawyer lacked a client. And so the broker went chasing, shall we say, not behind an ambulance or to a hospital, to be sure, for there are no hospitals or ambulances for stricken bondholders, but among his clients. He dug up the dentist. But let the dentist, Dr. Lautenbach, tell his own story:

Q. What conversation did you have with this gentleman [the broker]?

A. He simply called me up and said there was a reorganization taking place, or they wanted to reorganize the company and wanted to know if I would sign some papers in regard to it. That is all I know.

Q. Did he describe the papers to you?

A. No, sir. He said he would bring them up.

Q. Did he tell you who was going to be your lawyer?

A. I think he said something about a Mr. Davis being in town representing the company.

Q. Did he say that Mr. Davis was going to represent you?

A. No, sir.

Q. And you had never met Mr. Davis?

A. No, sir. . . .

Q. Where did you sign this petition?

A. Down in the attorney's office. [*The attorney for the other side: the trustee*].

Q. Did you know the contents of the petition?

A. I read it.

Q. Well, did you appreciate the contents of it?

A. As best that I could. I could not remember it now.

Q. Could you or could you not give your judgment as to what was in the paper that you signed?

A. Just something that they wanted to reorganize the company and the government was trying to confiscate the holding company or something of that kind. . . .

Q. Did you have any appreciation at that time that you were being represented by Mr. Davis of New York?

A. Not I personally.

Q. You have never met Mr. Davis personally?

A. I don't know the gentleman.

Q. You never had any arrangements to pay an attorney any fee for representing you?

A. No, sir.

Q. You never made any arrangements to retain an attorney to act for you in your interests?

A. No, sir.

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It was now time for Mr. Davis to rise. He did so, frozen with poise and dignity. He said:

> Q. Mr. Lautenbach, when you signed the petition you understood it was going to be filed in this proceeding?
> A. Yes, sir.
> Q. And you were told that I would represent you on that petition?
> A. Yes, sir, not me but the company.
> Q. Not you?
> A. No, sir.
> Q. Have I your authority now to proceed on that petition to argue the questions in this case?
> A. Yes, sir.

Mr. Davis, surveying the scene with a visage which announced his complete triumph, said:

"That's all I ask of you."

The thing should really be set to music. And with the lyrics written by Bugs Baer, it ought to be a wow.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Sad But (Otherwise) True

"LA MATERNELLE," the latest French film to be released in New York, can hardly be called a first-rate picture for several basic reasons. But there are many fine things about it, and in particular there is a good tip as to what may be done with camera art, to give it a home of its own and a difference from the other arts, so that it will not always be something like their poor relation.

It is not so much that "La Maternelle" has anything to contribute in camera work as we now know it, in angles, perspective, design—in the way of photographing a thing, that is. Some of its photography is good and some (the trick dissolve shots or that seedy sequence of the kid throwing pebbles at an image in the water, and finally jumping in) ought to have been left on the cutting-room floor. Its departure is rather in the choice and use of the things photographed: it is one of those rare films where the camera has gone out into the world, instead of having the world come before it, and pose.

Jean Benoit-Levy, who directed with Marie Epstein, had the job of filming a story laid in a school for young children. He could of course have rigged up a school set and flooded it with little Shirley Temples, Nova Pilbeams, Our Gangers and other stage-hardened prodigies. Again, he could have gone into an actual school and scared the pants half off the kids by trucking up with his cameras and saying: "Now, Johnny, you just speak this line, carefully adapted for the part by Joseph Mankiewicz, and don't be afraid"; walked through it a couple of times, and then taken a picture of kids trying very bravely not to be kids and not to look as though they had any idea where the camera was. In short, he could have got either the usual adult's idea of what a kid would do, or what passes for "unaffectedness" among the usual documentary films.

But he had time, he had patience. So he went into an actual school and worked around with the children till they were so used to him and his strange machinery that they could apparently go on with their play and work, grave and oblivious in their own strange world. There was a minimum of actual necessary business for them to go through consciously, and when he approached this, he seems to have given the barest stipulations, letting the kids play around with it until they felt it, answered and reacted spontaneously.

Out of what they were able to get in this way, the directors (to give their high naturalism a meaning) have selected and put together just the right elements to make a setting that is germane and completely charming. What they load this setting with is another and sadder matter. A lover of children, a general maid in the school, has taken particularly under her wing little Paulette Flambert, a girl of definitely psychopathic jealousy and emotional hunger, deserted by her mother, who is a tart. There are several supporting plot movements; the pathos of everything is established by cutting upwards of forty times to Paulette, her face and body twisted with the agony of it (variation here is so meager that one ten-foot clip could just as well have been used for half her work in the picture); the kid finally wanders off and attempts suicide because her idol has been proposed to by the good and wooden doctor; and in the end there is achieved a happy marriage and the New Understanding.

All this is possible but the story is slight, the child moons around until the unsympathetic nature of such a character is raised almost to burlesque, and as to the business of Rose's romance, the causes and consequences thereof are rather obscure, Madeleine Renaud having produced (whatever her creative talents) a figure that is a cross between several splints of kindling wood and a glass of milk. Development is at a minimum and made terribly stiff and unreal by repetitious and prolonged and inconsequential close-ups. As far as the main story is concerned it is a frank tear-jerker, handled as such with obviousness and a ponderous lack of resource. In short, this part of it, which is right in the dead center of it, I can't even take seriously. I guess I'm just not the eternal mother.

But where the sentiment is true, where it is managed as it should be, with open sincerity and the right delicate restraint, the film becomes lovely indeed. I don't now remember anything on the screen that is quite so engaging as the part of Mme. Paulin, played by Madi Berri—such a mixture of natural roughages and low comedy, quiet busyness, tenderness and homely beauty. Alice Tissot gives the stock matron part a fine, intelligent reading. And no one will remember anything like the children, filing out of the school, squabbling solemnly on the playground, uneasy in their school cantata with scratching for lice, singing and asking and taking their dose of salts as they're told with the remote careless unconsciousness that is as natural to them as it is to puppy dogs. And this is the thing, this finely arranged composite of little, overlooked details, that the cameras may go out and catch and give a fresh meaning to, so that the screen will hold up the mirror to life, not as lived on phony studio sets, in books, in paintings, on the stage, but as lived. The difference is as sharp and refreshing as the difference between the woods of New England, now in the fall, and an expensive landscaping job in Westchester.

OTIS FERGUSON.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Commissioner Hodson Replies

SIR: You were good enough to send me a proof copy of a forthcoming article in The New Republic relating to the administration of relief in New York City, and to permit me a brief reply, to be published in the same issue.

May I first call your attention to the statement that the Mayor and I have ignored the findings of the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment Relief. Because of impaired health I resigned as Relief Administrator and went abroad a few days after the issuance of their report (March, 1935). Throughout my administration I have consistently asked for more money for relief than was appropriated. In practically every instance the state Temporary Emergency Relief Administration cut my monthly requests on the ground that state and federal funds were not sufficient to meet these requests. Since the state and federal governments provide three-quarters of the total expenditure for relief, it was manifestly impossible for Mayor LaGuardia and the City of New York to shoulder the extra burden alone, nor is it fair to lay the blame on the mayor when the state and federal governments refused to appropriate what the local authorities needed and requested. The press and the public have pretty generally overlooked the fact that relief has been the joint responsibility of city, state and federal governments. When things go wrong and criticism is leveled at what is being done, it is always the local administrator who takes it on the chin, often for acts pursuant to the orders of, or the limitations imposed upon him by, the higher branches of government.

Your article deals with a report prepared more than a year ago by an investigator employed by the Director of the T.E.R.A., which you refer to as a "suppressed report." It was certainly suppressed so far as I was concerned, because I never saw it until four days ago when I read extracts from it in one of the papers for October 16, 1935. At no time did I receive any communication from the state or federal government as to the charges contained in the report, nor was I ever given an opportunity to answer it before it was circulated. It seems strange that my superiors who asked for the inquiry were not concerned as to what was done with the findings.

The substance of the accusation made against me is that I denied the existence of a so-called "Red" list in my department, although I had actually ordered or authorized the compilation of such a list. As you state, on July 9, 1934, I denied the existence of such a list, and further denied that discharges in the Works Division had been on the basis of it. I repeat that I did not order the preparation of the list, nor did I order the dismissals of Communists, agitators, etc. The facts are that the Police Department on its own initiative began an investigation of certain riots that occurred in May, 1934. The Police Department asked one of my staff to cooperate in obtaining the names of those who were causing difficulty in the proper conduct of work-relief projects. He did not inform me of the request, and on his own initiative proceeded to make inquiries of project supervisors and transmitted the names given him to the Police Department. This fact could have been ascertained by the investigator, and had I seen the report before it was circulated the truth could have been established. The investigator came to see me a month after my denial of July 9 and, meanwhile, there was much discussion in the press of a Police Department list. When the investigator asked me to help him get the list from the Police Department I referred him to the member of my staff who had charge of our contacts with other city departments. It must be obvious from this that I had no wish to conceal or withhold any information. I am fully aware that an executive is officially responsible for the acts of his subordinates. I wish to make it clear, however, that personally I had no knowledge of this matter and took no part in it. Nor would I have approved it if the facts had come to my knowledge in time to have prevented it.

In the month of July, 1934—the month covered by this report—there were more than 16,000 discharges from the work-relief payrolls. These discharges had to be made in wholesale fashion in order to keep within the appropriation. Nevertheless, we reinstated during that month 217 who satisfied us that they had been discharged through error or discrimination. Again, in August, there were 13,839 discharges, and 756 reinstatements where error or discrimination was charged. These facts disclose the impossibility of a perfectly just and rational system of discharge under the circumstances, and they also indicate that my administration was not deaf to the appeals of those who felt they had been unfairly dealt with.

I regret that your article fails to quote from the investigator's report the following:

> Careful inquiry and investigation regarding this phase of the question failed utterly to reveal any evidence of discrimination or bias against the admittance of members of organizations such as the A.O.P.E.E. . . . or other persons who were described as radicals or agitators on the part of the personnel office of the Works Division.

This in the face of the fact that 2,000 additions to the work-relief payroll were made during the month of July.

Nor did you quote the following from the investigator's report:

> No emergency relief worker, so far as could be learned, was dropped from the Work Relief Bureau merely for entertaining any private minority political opinion, *i. e.*, for subscribing to Socialist, Communist or extremist doctrines.

I have always taken the position that there must be no discharges or discrimination for organization membership or organization activity outside working hours. I have listened to protesting delegations time out of number, and directed my staff to meet with such delegations, which they have done constantly throughout my administration. I persuaded General O'Ryan, then Police Commissioner, to deprive the policemen who covered our offices of their clubs. These acts are indicative of my general attitude in the matter of dealing with protesting work reliefers, agitators and delegations generally.

On the other hand, I have always insisted that a man who did not do a day's work, who soldiered or engaged in organization activity while on the job, should be dismissed whether he was a Republican, a Democrat, a Socialist or a Communist. There is no other possible way to administer a relief program with any measure of efficiency.

WILLIAM HODSON,
New York City. Welfare Commissioner, New York City.

A Square Deal for Internes

SIR: The hospital interne, facing an insecure future, finds himself in an unsatisfactory present, after an expensive past. He is a physician fully qualified to practise and has a B. A. or B. S. degree to boot. To round out his training he serves as an interne for a period of one to two and a half years. The educational value of hospital training for the interne is well known to the lay public. But the value of interne service to the hospital is not generally realized.

Despite the fact that our services are indispensable to the hospital, we adult men and women must go to our long suffering parents for our simplest requirements. Internes do not receive salaries. But this is only one of the many grievances that led to the organization of the Interne Council of Greater New York. Sixteen months old, it represents 900 of the 1,500 New York internes.

We are asking not only for salaries (a $15-a-month "honorarium" is included in the 1936 budget; we asked for $50). Among other things, we desire:

> 1. An improvement in the educational facilities in many hospitals. Some hospitals have been found by the Council not to comply with American Medical Association requirements, *e. g.*, in libraries.

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2. Compensation for injury or death. At present we are unprotected. An injured ambulance driver collects workmen's compensation; the injured interne riding on the same ambulance gets nothing. In several test cases, the city has fought internes' claims and won.

The Interne Council of Greater New York.
EDWARD R. SCHLESINGER, M. D.,
New York City. Chairman of the Executive Committee.

A Boomerang for Britain

SIR: When Britain negotiated the secret naval deal with Hitler, approved his violation of the Versailles Treaty, thereby breaking the "Stresa common front" and encouraging the Nazis' defiance and outlawry, she did not consider the security or feelings of that group of League nations trying to keep the status quo—peace.

Since 1922 Britain has closed her eyes to Mussolini's warlike and expansive ambitions, his intrigues in the Balkan States to offset the Little Entente's influence, his yelling for treaty revision, and she has fostered his air and naval forces as a future card against France. Not needing the League, she let him try to render it as useless and ridiculous as possible, and with MacDonald joined him in his "four-power plan," a direct blow against the League and the small nations. Except for her water rights, she regarded Ethiopia as Italy's, and when France got her in the League, Britain objected, saying Ethiopia permitted slave trading. Now alarmed at a too strong Mussolini and his next move, at the effect it would have on her colonial peoples and possibly in Europe, alarmed at Selassie's resistance—knowing his rights and having gained world sympathy for his brave stand—she turns to the League. Mussolini threatens her with the air and naval forces she engendered, while he uses her own arguments of Ethiopian slavery in his attempts to justify his aggression. Britain, by her silent past approval, has encouraged Mussolini in his Ethiopian venture, just as by her present maneuverings she is nurturing a far greater menace in Hitler. . . .

San Francisco, Calif. H. C. MCCARTHY.

Extracts from Letters

PERSONS of all faiths, creeds and political beliefs are invited to participate in a People's March for Peace, to be held in New York City on the afternoon of Saturday, October 26, according to an announcement of the event sent us by the American League Against War and Fascism. The League is one of the organizations coöperating in arranging this event, which is not to be a demonstration in favor of any political platform, but is being scheduled as a means of affording the whole population an opportunity to demonstrate the simple fact of their opposition to war and their desire for peace. The parade will march up Fifth Avenue to Fifty-ninth Street, and thence across to Columbus Circle, where a number of prominent speakers will address a mass meeting.

An appeal has been sent to us on behalf of the seven miners from the Harlan, Kentucky, coal fields who are now serving life sentences for murder as a result of the famous "Battle of Evarts" in 1931 in which miners defended themselves against company guards armed with machine guns. John Dos Passos heads a committee that is making a special drive to obtain pardons for the seven convicted miners, one of whom is the eighty-year-old president of the local union of the United Mine Workers of America. Sympathizers are urged to write to Governor Ruby Laffoon of Kentucky in support of the pardon petition, and to send contributions to the Kentucky Miners' Defense Committee, Room 303, 94 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

The League for Industrial Democracy sends an announcement of its first Southern Conference to be held in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on October 26 and 27. The Conference will discuss labor problems in the South, the plantation system, education and the press.

The Young Men's Hebrew Association announces a series of courses in topics of contemporary interest to be given during the year at the Association headquarters, Lexington Avenue and Ninety-second Street, in New York City. The courses are open to the general public and among the instructors will be Sidney Hook, V. F. Calverton, Ludwig Lore, Martha Graham, John Martin, Elsa Findlay and Jack Schuyler.

Richard Lake, of Missoula, Montana, sends us a copy of the ruling adopted by the State Board of Education of Montana banning the novel "Passions Spin the Plot," by Vardis Fisher, and "all books of similar character" from the libraries of all the units of the University of Montana. The sweeping terms of this ruling, together with the direct discrimination against the work of one of the ablest authors in the Northwest, have aroused many protests from liberal elements in Montana.

The Rand Playhouse, with headquarters in the auditorium of the Rand School of Social Science, 7 East Fifteenth Street, New York City, is offering its facilities to experimental dramatic groups interested in producing plays with a progressive social outlook. The Playhouse seats 600 people and is equipped by direct wire connecting with radio station WEVD for the broadcasting of experimental radio dramas and other special programs. Qualified groups wishing to make use of the Playhouse facilities are invited to communicate with George Field, secretary of the Playhouse.

The Committee for the Release of Charles Krumbein, who is now serving an eighteen-month sentence in a federal prison for using a false name on his passport, reports that the Federal Parole Board has denied his application for parole. Krumbein is a member of the Communist Party and it is claimed that the unusual severity of his sentence was due to his political convictions. Among those who addressed the Parole Board on Krumbein's behalf were Representatives Caroline O'Day, Vito Marcantonio and Maury Maverick and Senators Robert La Follette and Burton K. Wheeler. Further efforts to free Krumbein are now being organized by the Committee.

The California State Conference for United Action Against the Criminal Syndicalism Act is arranging a mass conference to be held at Sacramento in November on the day of the hearings of the workers convicted last spring under the Criminal Syndicalism Act. Preliminary conferences have been scheduled for San Francisco and Los Angeles this month to prepare for the statewide demonstration in November. An active campaign is being organized by liberal and labor groups not only to free the defendants now held in prison but to bring about the repeal of the act.

The National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners calls our attention to the fact that our recent editorial reference to lawyers employed by this Committee for the defense of Mother Bloor was incorrect, inasmuch as all attorneys involved in the case represent the International Labor Defense. The National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, whose address is 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City, does not engage in legal defense. It assists other organizations that are partly so occupied by mobilizing public sentiment on behalf of labor defendants and prisoners and aids in the collection of funds in specific cases.

The Committee of Artists for the Biro-Bidjan Art Museum writes that a number of American artists, under the auspices of the John Reed Club, are collecting works of art for the museum in the first Jewish autonomous territory in the world. The collection will be exhibited in New York and in Moscow before being sent to Biro-Bidjan. All works and requests for information in connection with the exhibit should be addressed to the Art Committee, care of Icor, 799 Broadway, New York City.

Peter Morell reports that as the strike of the Consumers' Research workers completes its second month, the heads of that organization, J. B. Matthews, F. J. Schlink, and his wife, M. C. Phillips, still refuse to negotiate with the union and are employing private guards to harass pickets and their sympathizers. The striking workers are in great need of funds for food and shelter. Contributions to the cause may be sent to the Technical, Editorial and Office Assistants' Union, Local 20055 at Box 144, Washington, New Jersey, or to the Consumers' Research New York Strike Aid Committee at 41 East Twentieth Street, New York City.

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Opera Blues

Porgy and Bess. Music by George Gershwin; libretto by DuBose Heyward; lyrics by DuBose Heyward and Ira Gershwin. Alvin Theatre, October 10, 1935.

ONE THING to be said about "Porgy and Bess" is that a composer who has had, and could have, various kinds of Broadway success, has turned aside from such close and immediate advantage to write a serious opera. We must be careful not to say that Mr. George Gershwin ought to be applauded for this action. We should do ourselves more credit and him more justice to say that from the start the virtue of it was inherent in his nature, and that he thus begins a forward expression of himself. All this is a good sign generally, not only for the composer but for the theatre and for music.

I said to one of the most intelligent theatre-goers I know, how great a pity it was that Porgy had to be done by a player who is so light-colored. Most of the company, in fact, needed to be darker, or to be made-up so. For the necessities of the opera, of course, voice, training and other qualities had to come before the matter of color. But what I meant to say was that if Porgy is to be thus near to white, the psychology of the role is greatly changed. The Negro pathos, simple goodness and various other qualities take on a different slant.

"Perhaps," my friend said, "that's what the trouble with the whole thing, it's neither black nor white."

A work of art—this is basic—is, obviously, free of everything outside itself. At its own peril it departs from its material, but it can depart to whatever extent it pleases. In so far as it invites comparison with or reference to its material, it can be judged by the degree of its resemblance to the material. Mr. Gershwin's music for a Negro opera could, therefore, have no resemblance at all to the Negro quality, if he chose to risk it. "Porgy and Bess," as a play, could do the same, though with a far greater, and perhaps fatal, risk. The same is true of the directing, and of the opera as a whole. "Porgy and Bess," however, does not seek to be free of its material, but, on the contrary, to be close to it. The music, the play and the directing will fall apart whenever they do not keep the same relation to the Negro life portrayed.

I am not a music critic, but I may say that I thought Mr. Gershwin's opera a real disappointment. It was too long, for one thing. It was curiously monotonous without creating any single compelling mood. Many in the audience thought the choral passages the best in the opera. This may have been; I can only say that they did not carry me far enough to make me forget the beautiful Negro choir singing that I have listened to, how often! It was said, too, that Mr. Gershwin has marred his opera's integrity by fitting in the song numbers, sure to be popular hits. I have a notion, rather, that the song hits, for what they are, are more convincing than the rest of the opera, for what it is. You may say that this music is too sophisticated for this "Porgy" material; or you may say that this music is not sophisticated enough to discover some final line for this primitive, rich substance. Some of my Jewish friends have spoken to me of how many Jewish composers have been drawn to the music of the Negro. Is it some Orientalism, or some sadness, common to both, they ask, or what is it? Without trying that discussion, I merely note that a certain monotony in the music of "Porgy and Bess" is more true to the Oriental than it is to the Negro; the Negro characteristic exhibits states of feeling greatly varied and quickly changing from one state to another, as everybody knows. Mr. Gershwin's orchestration was sometimes empty, often clever and not seldom beautiful.

The play of "Porgy" was born meat for opera. The progression of its plot suits the simplification and widening that music entails. The libretto provided is clear and in emotional climaxes and in words is singable, a rare quality.

Mr. Mamoulian's directing in the mourning scene, the storm, the mystery and terror, the shadows thrown against the wall, is superb, as it was in the original production of "Porgy." Otherwise, most of the opera has the same general qualities of direction as before. As a complete work of art, free of the Negro material, "Porgy and Bess" might be directed to a wildfire pitch of action and movement. But without the due amount of relaxation and flexible languor, this play's motivations and dénouement make no sense. In "Porgy and Bess," furthermore, the directing includes even more details than we saw in "Porgy," the stage business is more hammered in. This matters less in some of the thin recitative passages or those with tiny but surefire hints of "I Pagliacci" or "Cavalleria Rusticana." But where the music grows more beautiful or the drama narrows to greater intensity, this detailed directing, so busy, subdivided and individual, sometimes makes the singing and acting seem to be going on against a background of monkey-cage.

The setting for Catfish Row that Mr. Soudeikine has designed is obvious and murky; I thought it less good than Mr. Cleon Throckmorton's for "Porgy." Mr. Smallens conducted the orchestra admirably, and the Theatre Guild provided a most generous production.

Its racial character had to be limited by the dramatic and musical needs, but the company as a whole was excellent. Numerous performances, especially the Sportin' Life of Mr. John W. Bubbles, were capital. If Miss Anne Brown as Porgy's Bess was none too convincing in the role, she was very good in the singing. Mr. Todd Duncan, who, it seems, has never acted before, gives a beautiful, poignant performance, well sung, well acted and always sustained. As a player with such manifest powers of giving himself to a role and its emotional requirements, he needs a piece of friendly advice. It is usually true in the theatre that an actor who does a part well right off, say even at the first rehearsal, is apt to be no better, if not worse, in the end. Mr. Duncan's case is not that exactly. What he needs is to watch himself, he needs to do this: Try to recall exactly the emotions he portrayed on this first-night performance. Choose what seem best and final among these and try to fix them in his mind. Try also to remember the action that went with each of them. When he has memorized thoroughly what he felt and how he expressed it in his acting, he can then consider what changes can yet be made and remembered. Otherwise, what will happen is that he will draw emotions from his own emotions, not from the role, and get his performance finally into a mere private mush, not acting at all.

STARK YOUNG.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Communism Faces the Wrath to Come

MR. BROWDER'S book[1] is interesting less as an exposition of the American problem in its essentials than as an index to the approach of an able official of the party immersed in the daily struggle for his cause. As analysis "Communism in the United States" does not begin to compare with Mr. Lewis Corey's recent remarkable volume. But it reveals all the qualities that give communism its immense virility.

There is the power to simplify, the assured self-confidence, the insistence on minutiae of orthodoxy, the curious anxiety to see things as Moscow would have them seen, the ignoring of the time-factor as an element in the program involved. But there is abounding energy, a directness of purpose, a sense of the sweep of phenomena—qualities that are from any angle impressive. Mr. Browder today leads a party in the United States that does not seem to threaten the major organizations of American politics. Yet I miss my guess if the failure of the Roosevelt experiment does not leave him, or some successor, one of the outstanding figures in the American scene. As I read America, on certain conditions the future is on his side.

For the two and one-half years of Mr. Roosevelt's administration have shown conclusively that planning under capitalism is not a feasible adventure. Particularly, it is not a feasible adventure in a society which, like that of America, is so deeply rooted in a tradition of lawless individualism. Despite his energy and courage, Mr. Roosevelt has not been able to keep pace with either the extent or the intensity of his problems. More, he has not been able to persuade the owners of capital to behave like gentlemen. What his outlook persuades him to regard as mere excrescences upon the system are in fact inherent in its essential nature. So long as it persists, planned production for community consumption is unattainable. That can be expected only today by a change in the basis of class-relations in society.

With all that Mr. Browder says along these lines I find myself in agreement. My difficulties belong to another realm of discussion. His problem, like that of all of us, is to build up an unbreakable party before the success of fascism in America sweeps all radical parties out of legal existence. How does he propose to do this? His answer seems to be the old answer of Moscow—by building up the united front from below. From that angle, Mr. Browder's discussion seems to me to have all the characteristic weaknesses of the official propaganda of communism. He suffers from that disease of orthodoxy which makes ten enemies for every friend it acquires. There are all the characteristic attacks on the good faith of people whose good faith is unimpeachable, the characteristic insistence on the letter of Moscow instead of upon the spirit of Marx and Lenin, the distortions, the exaggerations, which confuse and divide the working class at a time when the need for unity is imperative. If a foreigner may say so, the weakness of the American labor movement makes these habits far more dangerous than they are, for instance, in Great Britain or France. In such countries, common danger will force to a united front even leaders who now spend most of their time attacking it. The American difficulty is the existence of innumerable oppositions to capitalism, most of which are not on speaking terms. I do not think Mr. Browder's exposition is likely to promote their alliance. Most of it, in good Moscow style, is the continuous insistence that Codlin and not Short is the worker's true friend. That, no doubt, persuades the converted. I wonder how many of the dubious and the antagonistic it swings to his side?

Personally, I regret this the more for two reasons. (1) In general diagnosis, Mr. Browder's approach seems to me infinitely more adequate than that of the people he criticizes, and (2) I agree with him that the united front is essential if American fascism, with any hope of success, is to be fought in the open. If I read the American situation correctly, the present is a comparatively liberal era compared to what the state of affairs will be when Wall Street again has its own President in the White House. If that is the case, the time for achieving unity is now. And unity will not be born of emphases like those of Mr. Browder's to the effect that his party is invariably right and other parties invariably wrong. That way lies the tragedy of Hitler's success; and I know no country in the world where that success could be so easily repeated as in the United States. The way with his critics is the way of persuasion, not the way of bludgeon. On an outsider, at least, Mr. Browder leaves the impression that he prefers the latter weapon.

It is a pity for a very simple reason. No one can study the general drift of events since the War without the conviction that the Marxian diagnosis of our ills is without a rival in the field. But no one, either, can seriously deny that fascist successes have been largely due to the confusion produced among the masses by the divisions among the left. A man may think, as I think, that the errors of communist tactics in, for example, China and in Germany were grave, and yet feel convinced that the deeper unity of aim transcends those errors. He may regret, as I regret, the bureaucratism of Moscow, and yet feel convinced that the defense of the Soviet Union is one of the highest duties a Socialist can fulfill.

But there is a duty in these matters incumbent upon Communists also. The recent Congress of the Third International has emphasized the need to defend political democracy where it still exists, while there is time. *While there is time.* It is necessary to emphasize these words. With world war on the near horizon, with capitalism more anti-democratic as it declines, that time is short. Mr. Browder's task, as I see it, is to multiply the chances of union and not those of division. The alternative is to conceive that fascism is a stage through which we have to pass on the road to socialism. I do not think Mr. Browder takes this un-Marxian view. I regret deeply, therefore, that he should not have directed his book to making more possible that union of the working class forces which is the necessary condition of victory.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

[1] Communism in the United States, by Earl Browder. New York: International Publishers. 352 pages. $2.

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Agrophantics

Nations Can Live at Home, by O. W. Willcox. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 279 pages. $2.75.

THIS BOOK demonstrates that the imaginings of a chemical engineer can be much more fantastic than those of a novelist. Dr. O. W. Willcox in the first paragraph of his introduction says that his primary object is to answer the question: "What is the maximum number of persons who can exist on the produce of one acre, or one square mile, of arable land?

On page 157 the modest answer appears:

> If there should be evolved new varieties of perultra agrotypes with low enough nitrogen percentages, we might at some future date find one square mile of arable land yielding in one crop cycle 969,440 tons of dry vegetable substance, containing sufficient calories (if they could all be recovered as food without loss) to give an annual minimum ration of 3,510,000 persons.

After making this extraordinary statement he suffers from a twinge of remorse and states that if all of the arable land of the earth produced at this rate there would be such a locking up of solar energy that the temperature of the whole earth would fall to 160 degrees below zero, and he does not know of any agrotypes that will grow in such a temperature.

Dr. Willcox expresses contempt for both the agronomist and the practical farmer, and if either should read the book I have no doubt there would be a building up of mutual disesteem. The corn and livestock farmers of the Middle West will be interested and amused by the following prediction:

> We may now reasonably expect to see the well managed stock farms of the future take on the appearance of vast lawns, which will be kept well watered and fertilized and frequently mowed for the protein-rich young grass, which will be dried and stored for use throughout the year. Corn fields will largely disappear because even perultra corn, in so far as existing varieties require a full growing season for one crop, can hardly compete with lawn grass in quality or quantity of feeding values.

And before the farmers of the United States agree with Dr. Willcox that agrobiologists should be substituted for agronomists, they should realize that his idea of "one of the most beneficent aggregations of mathematical symbols ever put together for the guidance of humanity" is the following equation: Log (100 -y) equals 2 minus .301x.

In all of this Dr. Willcox is laboring fantastically in the field that the late Dr. W. J. Spillman developed rationally. In the Department of Agriculture bulletin, "Uses of the Exponential Yield Curve in Fertilizer Experiments," published a short time after his death, Spillman takes into account economic factors that are quite neglected by Willcox when he berates the farmers for not getting by irrigation, fertilization and plant breeding 225 bushels of corn per acre, 171 bushels of wheat, 395 bushels of oats, and so on.

The point of the argument is that if the farmers of Italy, Japan and Germany will do their duty there will be no need for military pressures. There are a few suggestions in Dr. Willcox's work, but unfortunately he claims so much in such an unbalanced way that reasonable men are antagonized. Even if his claims as to the number of people that can be fed from an acre of land were scientifically and economically practical, it would seem to be high time to raise the question of quality as distinguished from quantity. Scientists and engineers, and especially the chemists of the future, should have more training in the humanities. Otherwise they may "Frankenstein" us with the application of their lurid imaginings.

HENRY A. WALLACE.

Poker Face

The Magnate: William Boyce Thompson and His Time (1869-1930), by Hermann Hagedorn. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. 351 pages. $3.

WHEN Thompson was seventeen "everybody agreed that he would never amount to a damn." His deadpan face and his almost complete inarticulateness were severe handicaps with the girls (with the fellers, too). But they were priceless assets in a poker game. He was a born plunger and without fail won in a gamble ("Shucks, they teach poker in Sunday school where I come from"). So he gravitated from Butte, Montana, where he was considered a boob, to Wall Street, which took him to its bosom.

One morning, Mrs. Thompson unfolded The New York Herald, and gave an exclamation:

> "How silly the newspapers are!"
> "What's up now?"
> "Here's a story that says you've made five millions!"
> "It's true."

By 1914 he was living in a palace on the banks of the Hudson, unhappy among the unhappy wealthy. Then the War broke, opening to Americans of his stripe vistas of which they had never dreamed. His friends—Lamont, Davison, Baruch, Hoover—all went out to take a hand at making history. And so, when the Tsar was overthrown, Thompson had himself sent to Russia, to try to stiffen by American methods the indispensable Eastern Front against Germany.

When the Germans captured two islands in the Baltic, close to Petrograd, he noted that real-estate values rose in that city and insurance rates fell, that his Russian colleagues were selling their country short because they hated democracy and hoped everything from a German victory and an ensuing military dictatorship. Which set Thompson a-thinking. The Bolsheviks, he did not doubt, were German agents and would be swallowed by limbo the day Ludendorff's gold gave out. So he put his money on Kerensky, for whom he conceived a juvenile admiration, and did some interesting things. He got money from Morgan, and also from Catherine Breshkovsky, "grandmother of the Revolution"—a startling combination.

But Thompson had a mobile mind and an insatiable great-man complex. When the Soviets triumphed it took him just three days to make the transfer from Kerensky to Lenin and Trotsky, and to become convinced (almost alone among foreign observers) that they were there to stay. "This revolution was as necessary to the development of Russia as the abolition of slavery to us," he told a journalist, and "we have quite a bit to fix up over there, too." Wall Street was stunned and Long Island shocked, and when he came back Wilson very firmly refused him an audience. Thompson had to find out that fifty million dollars (and more) speaking through his mouth could be entirely wrong.

So he quickly retraced his steps, contributed $300,000 to the Republican campaign fund, wept when Harding got the nomination, went electioneering for him none the less,

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beamed beatifically from the front porch at Marion and in 1930 angled for a place in the Cabinet, which he didn't get. But before he died he found other things to do—he trebled his fortune in the bull market, for instance; he built a shrine for Mellon, replacing Lenin's in his artless heart; he founded an institute for botany.

The one short aberration in the second half of his life alone preserved it from being completely humdrum and justifies the publication of a scholarly full-dress biography—a biography that in all its seriousness brings out the irresistibly funny quality of this Sancho Panza of the prairies.

PETER OLDEN.

Educating Free Men

Education in a Changing World, by W. B. Curry. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 192 pages. $2.

A FEW years ago I listened to Mr. Curry talk to a group of parents whose children were in the more select private schools. His insistence on fundamental values, his courage in plainly telling those very well bred parents that different kinds of education have different purposes, and that they must recognize this and know what they want, was immensely impressive. It stirred that audience as I am sure no other discussion of education ever had. But, I said to myself, he is a radical, his purpose is education for a communistic society. Marxians explain things so clearly, and there is so much mental fuzziness and pesudo-scientific theorizing among other progressive teachers in relating the purposes of modern education to its methods.

But this book with its timeless (in spite of its title) principles, proves that I was wrong, that a simple old-fashioned belief in the educative value of the search for knowledge can give as fine intellectual passion and concrete method to teaching as any fixed theory. At Dartington Hall, England, the school made possible by the support of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Elmhirst, Headmaster W. B. Curry dedicates these qualities to the task of educating free individuals in social responsibility—of passing on a belief that the search is the thing, and of giving some equipment for carrying on fairly among one's fellow men.

Mr. Curry points out that in the face of the present growth of political and social dictatorships, parents have the right to ask themselves whether they wish to educate their children in a way which leaves a strong chance that their lives will be spent in prison or worse. But he makes an eloquent case for the fact that if all parents answer no, there is apparently no hope at present for social or individual progress, for freedom of the spirit or for mental or personal integrity.

Specifically this volume of eight essays, some of which have been published in these pages, discusses the vast importance of education for peace as an immediate measure for the preservation of civilization. Juvenile councils of the League of Nations are not enough. This education must be the genuine creation of a frame of mind in which the individual is a world, not a national, citizen. School competition and marks he relates to peace and the formation of friendly feelings that are necessary for peace, and also for individual happiness and independence. There is a strong argument for coeducation as furnishing the normal, natural environment for human beings. The perennial subject of freedom versus discipline is handled by means of an unusually clear explanation of how freedom (not license), exercised by individuals who must live together, is the best possible education in self-management and social adjustment. Throughout there are concrete cases and explanations in everyday language to pin down the theoretical statements. Most important in achieving the primary aim of education—the creation of civilized communities—are the preparation for social life by living a social life and the creation of a proper intellectual climate for pupils—that is, an atmosphere where the utmost freedom of discussion prevails between masters and pupils, without condescension, shushing or attempts to shock on the part of the masters.

About the familiar arguments as to whether progressive education prepares for life or not, Mr. Curry neatly says that the answer depends on what you mean by life. If you mean a dull routine job that is distasteful anyway, probably not; if you mean the ability to pursue actively and thoroughly a genuine interest, while feeling at home and easy in all personal relationships and assuming a share of social responsibility as a world citizen, the answer is undoubtedly yes.

EVELYN DEWEY.

The Critic's Refuge

Early Victorian Novelists, by Lord David Cecil. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 342 pages. $2.50.

THIS IS a brilliantly written revaluation of Dickens, Thackeray, Charlotte and Emily Brontë, Mrs. Gaskell, Trollope and George Eliot. Lord David Cecil is alert, responsive and widely read. He reports accurately the tone and flavor of a book, the moral and social attitudes behind it.

The Victorian novel was essentially an entertainment ("As late as 1880 well brought-up children were taught not to read novels before luncheon"); and, like other amusements, it was calculated to suit the tastes and prejudices of the largest possible audience. Thus it avoided sex, was funny and was sentimental. It might involve a cynical picture of society as a whole, as in Thackeray, or a violent condemnation of social conditions, as in Dickens, or a realistic portrayal of hunting, gaming, ambitious clergymen, as in Trollope; but all this was by the way. The story was the thing. Now, we go to the movies for entertainment, the modern, serious novelist having become first and foremost a teacher. The story is by the way. "Joseph and His Brothers," for example, is a commentary: the story is in the Bible.

But although Lord David Cecil is an admirable critic of individual books and literary periods, he is not very satisfactory as a philosopher of esthetics. He takes as the criteria of great art, "style," "range" and "creative imagination." As he himself points out, style and range alone do not constitute greatness. Creative imagination is the determining factor. This is all very well—but what is creative imagination? It seems to mean something different for every one of the authors considered. With regard to Dickens it is the enormous vitality of the Dickensian world: "A street in Dickens is very like a street in London, but it is still more like a street in Dickens." With regard to Trollope it is the actual identity of the society he describes with a certain section of English society. Ultimately, Lord David Cecil's "creative imagination" signifies no more than Clive Bell's "significant form," which, defined again and again, is only a tiresome rationalization of the critic's likes and dislikes.

ISABEL LEWIS.

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The Conquest of Germany

The Struggle for Supremacy in Germany: 1859-1866, by Heinrich Friedjung. New York: The Macmillan Company. 370 pages. $5.75.

FRIEDJUNG'S historical study of the struggle between Prussia and Austria for the mastery of Germany has long been famous in Central Europe; since its first publication in German it has gone through many editions. This first English version appears in greatly abbreviated form. Even so, it is to be welcomed, because Friedjung's lucid and brilliant exposition of the Austrian problem in 1866 throws considerable light on the Austrian situation down to this day.

During the nineteenth century Austria was the problem that had to be faced by the European peoples that were seeking national unity. This empire, composed of many conflicting races, could not become a homogeneous nation; but neither would Austria permit her neighbors—the Germans, the Italians, the South Slavs—to attain unity, lest it cause her own disruption. She had to play dog-in-the-manger—until at last she roused against herself such a wave of hatred that she was overwhelmed in the World War. It was Bismarck who solved the Austrian problem for the Germans. The Seven Weeks' War of 1866, into which he goaded Austria, was a civil war between North and South Germany; the "unification" that followed was really a conquest of Germany by Prussia. France was expected to intervene on the side of Austria, but was held back by the diplomatic genius of Bismarck, who managed to lull Napoleon III into neutrality by hinting at all sorts of concessions. The fatal error of Napoleon in permitting Prussia to defeat Austria was a lesson that France has never forgotten. And she remembers it most vividly at the present moment.

J. SALWYN SCHAPIRO.

The Arabs at Home

Black Tents of Arabia, by Carl R. Raswan. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 172 pages, illustrated. $4.

RASWAN is not a professional adventurer come home to sell sensations; nor a tourist retouching the highlights in his diary; nor a scientist troubled by the inaccessibility of his papers in learned journals and magnanimously sharing his discoveries with the general public in inexpert, Sunday-feature prose. Raswan is a man who had a good commercial reason for going to his far place and therefore looked at it with more care than is common to the writer of a travel book. As a matter of fact, his profession peculiarly fitted him for observation in Arabia; and even though his book lacks that large and intense imagination which makes masterpieces, it has an immediate air of reality.

A specialist in blooded horses, he went to Arabia as a horse trader. The Arabs are preëminently a race of animal breeders, and therefore it was a relatively simple matter for him to enter their way of life. Their animal-breeding economy was, to an extent, also his economy; what they regarded as important was to him important, too. There was a basis for sympathy, unusually close. He hardly realizes it himself. It becomes perfectly clear in the text, though in the introduction he has tried to explain it in the customary romantic terms—the "great calm" of desert life; "in the desert I breathe freely and the accumulated ballast of civilized life falls away, like a great burden from my shoulders."

Even in his talk of the Arabs, the physical descriptions show the eye of a man trained to notice musculature and carriage; and the herbage of the desert is made more real to the reader because it is dealt with in the practical terms of pasturage.

But Mr. Raswan might have laid more stress on this side of his experiences. More attention to daily life would have enabled him better to fulfill the aim expressed in the opening sentence of his introduction: "It is my desire in this book to deal with things of human interest rather than with scientific questions." The things of human interest include, as might at once be anticipated, a love story, not Mr. Raswan's, but that of his guide, Faris. The story is an unusual one, tender and tragic, in which the bridal couch became the deathbed. It is told with admirable simplicity and sweetness; its course is drawn through the book as unobtrusively as Flaherty draws the career of a family like a guiding thread through the descriptive fullness of his films. This, rather than the author's adventures, provides the continuity of the narrative. Yet, one feels constantly the lack of homely detail, details of breeding technique, of distribution of pasture, of the allotment of tasks, of the place of slavery in the desert economy, of other "human" matters, that would have given, as Mr. Raswan himself might say, "body" to the memories he has recorded here.

Incidentally the book is full of photographic illustrations so wisely chosen, so well reproduced, carrying forward the narrative so usefully, that they approach the ideal of illustrations—to become an integral part of the story.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Beyond Physics

Relativity, Gravitation and World Structure, by E. A. Milne. New York: The Oxford University Press. 368 pages. $8.

BY SHAKING the established concepts of space and time, the theory of relativity has tended to encourage a great deal of loose metaphysics not germane to empirical problems and incapable of empirical verification. Einstein himself, not content with his brilliant solution of the gravitational problem, became so hypnotized by his use of curved geometry as to imagine that it would provide a solution of the old metaphysical chestnut as to whether the universe is finite or infinite, in terms of a closed curved space of finite dimensions. Later, when the puzzling problem of the speeding away of the spiral nebulae was discovered, this conception was contorted into pictures of expanding and oscillating universes, universes created out of an atom and exploding into thin air, universes pulsating rhythmically, and what not.

The author of the present work, a noted British mathematician, started off as a sober critic of these conceptions by showing how the paradoxical speeding away of bodies visible in the outer reaches of the observed heavens could be accounted for under classical conceptions by merely supposing a cluster of bodies suddenly released after having their motions confined in a small space. In such a situation the faster bodies will be concentrated on the outside, and the whole system will present the phenomenon of the continual increase of mutual distances between bodies that has been observed by the astronomers.

Not content, however, with this purely hypothetical explanation of the recession phenomenon, Professor Milne has now sought to incorporate his conception in an *a-priori*

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cosmological construction, which is admittedly based on "rational" rather than empirical considerations. He has taken what might be called an *obiter dictum* of Einstein's special principle of relativity as a guide on his metaphysical venture, and has constructed his universe on the theory of equivalent particles. According to this theory, the bodies are so arranged that "the description of the system by A in terms of his clock measures and associated coördinates coincides with the description of the system by B in terms of B's clock measures or associated coördinates." The scheme does not embrace the problem of gravitation, for which Einstein's or Newton's formulations have to be specially introduced; it is confined entirely to the cosmological theme, and presents a number of ingenious details, such as the crowding of an infinite number of bodies into a finite span of spatial vision, which may be of interest to those who like that sort of thing.

BENJAMIN GINZBURG.

Books in Brief

The Life and Times of Catherine de' Medici, by Francis Watson. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 338 pages. $3.

SEVERAL great names and many small ones, towering intellectual giants and contemptible egotists, jostle one another in these pages. Mr. Watson writes, and writes uncommonly well, of a difficult character in a difficult age. The Renaissance has reached and passed its climax, the medieval is verging into the modern, church and politics and society are disintegrating and seeking new forms. High culture, extreme luxury and extreme cruelty go hand in hand. Peasant insurrections and lavish court festivities are expressions of the same process. And Catherine de' Medici is the epitome of her age. "Cold, curious, attentive to minutiae, she could be neither fanatic nor visionary. . . . She was intellectually myopic, and her successes, numerous and brilliant, were in small matters." One cannot help wishing that Mr. Watson would choose for the subject of his best biography some great name of the modern era, one that would be congenial to him intellectually and offer more scope to his extraordinary talents.

H. S.

The Sun Sets in the West, by Myron Brinig. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

It takes all kinds to make Copper City. It is *the* mining town, perhaps it is even America, "the Great American Mess" as one of the characters calls it in a speech to his socialite parents. Mr. Brinig has returned for material to Montana, the scene of his earlier novels, and has turned out a very pat work in which each little human drama fits into its social cubbyhole. There are many stories here, related only by the social scheme and by the choric gossip of Mrs. Ford and Mrs. McGafferty, and all the characters move forward almost in a block through neutrality, hope and disaster. These people are consistently symbolic, more often illustrative than human. The librarian is just a little too birdy, the artist Communist rather smug with his superior abilities and the struggle between his two major interests, the miner too stolid and humorless, and Maysie Turner, society woman, though the general picture of her activities and position is accurate enough, is so caricatured that she ceases to be an example of anything but a kind of social irritability in the author.

E. C.

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Contributors

H. N. BRAILSFORD, London correspondent for The New Republic, will shortly arrive in America for a lecture tour of this country.

ISIDOR FEINSTEIN, as associate editor of The New York Post, has made the editorial page of that newspaper one of the high spots of New York journalism.

JACK HARRIS is a student at Northwestern University who spends his summers as a professional sailor.

HAROLD J. LASKI is a member of the faculty of the London School of Economics and the author of several books dealing with economics and political science. Last year he made a lecture tour of the United States and Canada, following the publication of his latest book, "The State in Theory and Practice."

HENRY A. WALLACE, in addition to being Secretary of Agriculture in President Roosevelt's Cabinet, is a practical dirt farmer and a lifelong student of agricultural economics.

PETER OLDEN was born in Berlin, worked for a time on German newspapers, then came to America, where he taught at St. Louis University and wrote for The Louisville Courier-Journal. He is now living in Czechoslovakia.

EVELYN DEWEY has made extensive studies of intelligence and aptitude tests for school children. She is the author of "Schools of Tomorrow," written in collaboration with her father, John Dewey, and of "The Dalton Laboratory Plan."

ISABEL LEWIS was recently graduated from Barnard College and in the course of her free-lance journalism work has written for The New Republic and other magazines.

J. SALWYN SCHAPIRO is professor of history in the College of the City of New York and the author of "Condorcet and the Rise of Liberalism."

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER'S latest book is "From the Kingdom of Necessity," a novel of New York's Lower East Side published by Putnam's on October 15.

BENJAMIN GINZBURG, author of "The Adventure of Science" and former assistant editor of the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, is now completing a work on the intellectual and social origins of modern science.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Herman Simpson and Eleanor Clark.

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